

**THE EASTERN EUROPEAN IMMIGRANT
COMMUNITY OF ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI
C. 1850-1950**

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**Produced by the Historic Preservation Planner's Office
City of St. Joseph, MO
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Preface

In 2020 the City of St. Joseph entered into a Memorandum of Agreement under the Section 106 regulations with the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office to mitigate the adverse effects to the inventory of historic architecture in the city caused by the demolition of 822 Main Street, 914 Main Street, 624 East Highland Avenue, 119 Lafayette Street, 1202 Lafayette Street, and 1219/21 North 16th Street. This study was part of the mitigation stipulations set out in that document.

The initial portion of the study, produced in compliance with the MOA, follows here. It was accepted by the SHPO on May 20, 2021.

The intention is that this shall be an ongoing project and that additional aspects of the experience and impact of the Eastern European Immigrant Community will be explored and the findings will be added to this document.

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Introduction

St. Joseph, Missouri is a city with a deep history. Some of that history is well known – Jesse James, the Pony Express, Westward Expansion; but much is not. The stories of the immigrant communities that helped fuel the great economic boom of the last part of the 19th and early 20th centuries and in so doing left an indelible mark on the culture of the city, are not familiar to most people.

In the century between the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries, St. Joseph was a destination point for a large number of immigrants of Eastern European origin. They were fleeing economic and religious persecution in Europe and hoping for a better life in the United States.

This project is intended to open the conversation about this lesser known aspect of the city's history. It is no where near exhaustive, but it does provide a basic outline to the history and points the way to questions yet to be answered.

Eastern European Immigration to the United States

This study examines the Eastern European immigrant community in St. Joseph, Missouri in the period between c. 1850 and c. 1950. This was the period when large numbers of people were leaving Eastern Europe and heading to parts of the world where they believed that they would be more free; free to practice their religion and free to make a living. Between 1846 and 1940, 55 to 58 million Europeans moved to North and South America. The migration hit its peak between 1900 and 1909 with Austria-Hungary providing the largest number of immigrants. In 1907 more than 300,000 people from Austria-Hungary came to the United States, the largest number of immigrants from a single country in one year. In the 1850s upwards of 20,000 Bohemians were given passports to emigrate from Austria. Many more left illegally meaning the true number was likely closer to 64,000. Between 1880 and 1910 2.7 million people left Russia; the vast majority of which were Jews who spoke either Polish or German.¹ Leopold Caro, a Polish-Jewish lawyer described the exodus: “Entire regiments left in 1907 in order to earn money in America. Many houses stood empty, and in many others only old women and small children remained behind. In some villages the entire young generation left home. . . Everyone believed that America was the Promised Land, a true paradise.”²

Beginning in the mid-19th century, many governments in Eastern Europe began policies that made life dangerous for ethnic minorities including those of the Jewish faith. “Eastern Europe’s Jews were the most tragic victims of a growing conviction that emigration could solve the perceived ‘problem’ of national, linguistic, and religious diversity. Well before the Nazi conquest of the East, a broad consensus had developed – among Western diplomats, Zionists,

¹ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 4, 11, & 17.

² Quoted in Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 26.

humanitarian organizations, and East European officials, as well as ordinary Jews desperate for a better life – that the ‘solution’ to the so-called ‘Jewish problem’ would entail the mass emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe.”³ In the 1890s, government officials in Russia encouraged Jewish people to emigrate, while simultaneously striving to prevent more ethnically “desirable” citizens from leaving.⁴ Beginning in the 1880s, waves of violent anti-Semitism washed across Eastern Europe; these included the 1881-82 pogroms in Russia; the emergence of the openly anti-Jewish Christian Social Party in Austria; and a rash of blood libel trials. The promulgation of the so-called “May Laws,” a series of anti-Semitic edicts in 1881 made life in Eastern Europe untenable for many Jewish people. These laws concentrated Jewish communities into the “pale of settlement” and significantly reduced their civil and economic rights. Many Jewish people decided the life in Eastern Europe was too dangerous and that the time had come to make new lives in the United States.⁵ The period after World War I was associated with violent policies of ethnic cleansing, including the murder and deportation of Jewish people and the mass exodus (both voluntary and compulsory) of ethnic Germans. This “can be traced to the Wilsonian moment after World War I, when democratic governments began to selectively open and close the migration tap in order to mold nationally homogenous populations.”⁶ Certainly this escalated after the rise of Hitler and his occupation of the Sudetenland in 1938.

“The vast majority of Eastern European Jews who came to this country at the turn of the last century were the least educated, the poorest, and the most desperate. . . And so it was that Eastern European Jewish immigrants brought with them a mixture of pride, shame, nostalgia, and joy in the Yiddish culture and politics they left behind.”⁷ These immigrants were for all intents and purposes, refugees. Unlike other Eastern European immigrants they did not arrive in the United States as individuals seeking to work for a few years and then return to their home village with money in their pocket – a pattern that encouraged men to leave their families in the home country. Instead, Jewish immigrants came as families who were fleeing violent persecution and seeking freedom from oppression.⁸ “To East European Jews, ‘America signifies distance. America signifies freedom,’ wrote the Austrian-Jewish writer Joseph Roth in 1927.”⁹ For many,

³ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 18.

⁴ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 30.

⁵ Steven J. Gold, “‘The Jazz Singer’ to ‘What a Country!’ a Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18:3 (Spring 1999): 116; Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 72.

⁶ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 17.

⁷ Laura Levitt, “Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism,” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 816.

⁸ Steven J. Gold, “‘The Jazz Singer’ to ‘What a Country!’ a Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18:3 (Spring 1999): 117-18.

⁹ Joseph Roth, *The Wandering Jews*, trans. Michael Hofmann (New York, 2001), 93, 95 quoted in Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 8.

modernity signified an escape from the restrictions of the more stringent religious life they led in their home countries.¹⁰

The period from 1850 to 1920 is often referred to as the age of Mass Migration from Europe. “With revolutions in shipping technology and a growing reliance on a network of migrant finance, migration costs declined in the mid-19th century, ushering in a sustained Age of Mass Migration from Europe.”¹¹ Before the age of the steamship, emigrating from Eastern Europe was expensive and lengthy, averaging between 30 and 40 days. But by 1890, the trip had become easier and more affordable.¹² This shift from sail to steam, beginning in the mid-19th century, and the corresponding decline in the cost and the time it took to cross the Atlantic led to the rise of mass migration.¹³

Migration from Eastern Europe was fueled by the seemingly endless demand for cheap, unskilled labor in the growing industrial cities of the United States. Many of the immigrants made their way to the industrial Midwest and found work in the packing houses. Austrian emigrants tended to settle in the Midwest and the Northeast, perhaps because there were already established Austrian communities in those areas.¹⁴

The period of Mass Migration from Eastern Europe came to an end in the period around 1920. Nativists in the United States were troubled by the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe, seeing them as racially inferior.¹⁵ The decline in immigration began with the imposition of a literacy test on those who wished to enter the United States in 1917. The final straw was the creation of harsh immigration quotas in 1921.¹⁶ Following the First World War, the United States enacted quota laws designed to specifically limit immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe. The idea was to safeguard the “racial fitness” of the United States. The American Immigration Act of 1924, known as the Johnson-Reed Act, did result in the sharp decline of legal immigration to the United States from Eastern Europe.¹⁷ Anti-immigrant sentiment increased

¹⁰ Laura Levitt, “Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism,” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 815.

¹¹ Ran Abramitzky and Leah Boustán, “Immigration in American Economic History,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 55:4 (Dec. 2017): 1311, 1313.

¹² Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 4.

¹³ Ran Abramitzky and Leah Boustán, “Immigration in American Economic History,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 55:4 (Dec. 2017): 1314.

¹⁴ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 5, 68.

¹⁵ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 9.

¹⁶ Laura Levitt, “Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism,” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 817; Ran Abramitzky and Leah Boustán, “Immigration in American Economic History,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 55:4 (Dec. 2017): 1311, 1313.

¹⁷ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 107.

significantly with the onset of the Great Depression. Threatened American workers saw the immigrants as competition for scarce jobs.¹⁸

In 1892, Ellis Island was opened to facilitate a more rigorous screening of immigrants upon arrival. Starting the year before, the U.S. government had barred migrants who were seen to be ill, criminally inclined, immoral, or “likely to become a public charge.” The last phrase served as a catch-all: it tended to include nearly all unmarried women (unless they intended to work as domestics), pregnant women, and those women who were thought likely to become prostitutes. Following 1907, “poor physique” became the grounds for wholesale rejections. It was not necessary to be suffering from an actual medical condition to fall under this category, simply being thought to appear frail or underweight. This category tended to be applied most vigorously to Jewish people.¹⁹

Edmund Jussen, U.S. consul and German emigrant, warned of emigrants from East Europe, saying that they “have perverted ideas of liberty, and think of the United States as a country where no police interferes with freedom of action. . . Many of them think they have been governed too much at home and hope to find a country where they will not be governed at all.”²⁰

It was not just in the United States where commentators were troubled by the mass migration out of Eastern Europe to the U.S. The large number of people leaving Eastern Europe began to trouble nationalists who saw the mass emigration as a threat to their nation. There were efforts to dissuade people from leaving and to encourage those who had already left to return. The Russian government passed laws designed to make it difficult for “desirable” citizens to leave, and they were not the only ones to advocate such policies. After World War I, Edgar Prochnik, the Austrian vice-consul suggested that the Austrian government ban all emigration to the United States as this would enable Austria to hold on to its valuable “human material” and cripple the American steel and mining industries. He stated, “I need only mention the large quantity of valuable human material that is thrown into the great sieve at Ellis Island each year. It is precisely the most physically and intellectually productive elements who are lost to their homeland, and the qualitatively less valuable human material, the crude rubble. . . that remains at our disposal.” In 1920, Poland enacted passport restrictions that severely limited the number of Poles who could emigrate legally. However, at the same time, the Polish Interior Ministry actively encouraged Jews to emigrate “in the interest of the Polish Republic.”²¹

Some American officials put forward the argument that living in the United States, even temporarily, had a civilizing influence on Eastern Europeans. This was articulated in the report from the Dillingham Commission in 1911: “He leaves his village, a simple peasant in his peasant dress, usually not only unable to read and write, but not even desiring to. Ingrained in him are the

¹⁸ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 136.

¹⁹ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 40-41.

²⁰ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 63.

²¹ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 11, 60, 112.

traditions of his obligations to the church and to his superiors. . . [W]hen he goes back to his old home he is a different man. He is more aggressive and self-assertive. His unaccustomed money gives him confidence and he is no longer willing to pay deference to his former superiors. Frequently, too, the church has lost the influence it had had with him. Moreover, if he has not learned to read and write himself, he has at least seen the value of that ability and more anxious than before to send his children to school.”²²

Other observers were not so optimistic about the impact of living in America. Henry Stern, the U.S. consul to Hungary wrote in 1886, “Crude as these Slovacks [sic] leave their country crude they also return, for their exclusiveness and love for herding prevents that while in America any ‘real’ American ideas reach them and instead of ideas of real ‘liberty’ there is only the danger that they bring with them ideas of ‘license.’”²³

While commentators in the United States tended to believe that American values had a positive impact on the immigrants; observers in Europe were not convinced. In 1918-20 *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* was published by William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki. Thomas and Znaniecki looked at the family systems that characterized Polish and American society. They asserted that Polish families tended to work harmoniously as a unit with each member accepting her or his place in the structure. American families, they stated, were fragmented and each member tended to pursue her or his own self interests. They believed that life in America caused the Polish immigrant to abandon traditional family values and in fact, eventually to resent – and thus neglect – obligations to the family in the home country.²⁴

Commentators in Europe were troubled by the fraying of family bonds when men emigrated without their families. Sometimes the intention was for the family to follow once the husband/father had become established. But frequently, they had no intention of coming; the men were in the U.S. to earn money to make a better life in the home country.²⁵ [This pattern was part of the issue that underpinned the “Anti-Bohunk Campaign in St. Joseph.]

In the post-World War I period, East European governments actively sought to lure desirable expatriates back home. Some governments, while encouraging people to return, also worried that those who had once been desirable were no longer quite such good citizens, having become accustomed to higher living conditions and greater freedoms. The concern was that the returnees would bring these dangerous ideas with them. For the most part, this attempt to encourage returnees was only marginally successful; although, it was believed that Prohibition to push some who were wavering to return to their home countries where they could drink.²⁶

²² William Paul Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Emigration Conditions in Europe*, 388.

²³ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 63.

²⁴ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 84-85.

²⁵ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 85.

²⁶ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 113- 114.

In the first generation or so following immigration, Eastern European immigrants tended to hold on to the customs of the mother country. They continued to eat the foods that they were familiar with.²⁷ In many cities, Jewish people from Russia created *landsmanschaften*, organizations combining the functions of a synagogue and a community center.²⁸ In the early 20th century “established German Jews provided their Eastern European coethnics with organizations, activities, and jobs. At the same time, the Eastern Europeans also brought with them a strong tradition of communal organization and extensive involvement with social movements and political activism developed after their emancipation in Eastern Europe. Jews transplanted, modified, and invented a diverse array of associations, clubs, *landsmanschaften*, synagogues, and mutual benefit societies which made up the communal basis of Jewish-American life.”²⁹ This retention of old patterns troubled many who shared the ethnic background of the immigrants, but who had been in the United States for a longer period and were more thoroughly assimilated. There arose organizations to help “Americanize” new arrivals.³⁰

The people who came to the United States from Eastern Europe did so to find a better life for themselves and their families. One of the first challenges that they faced was how to make a living. Many found that their skills honed in the agricultural economy of their home countries were of little use in the American cities. Many of the Eastern Europeans found work in the packing houses of the industrial Midwest. Others undertook commercial ventures; a great many first-generation immigrants sold second-hand goods or were “junk dealers.” Their children and grandchildren frequently inherited those businesses but altered them to more “respectable” endeavors, opening more traditional retail establishments such as department stores. Others found a niche providing for the nostalgia that many felt for the food they remembered from home. Neighborhood groceries and bakeries were important both as a means for immigrant families to make a living and for feeding that nostalgic need. For many families, it took multiple incomes to make a living thus women and children helped generate income.³¹ Some families found that the “American Dream” worked and they were eventually quite financially successful.³²

The communities formed by the initial immigrants and their children often tended to be quite homogeneous and retained many customs from the home country. But as the first generation and their children died, these tight-knit communities began to disperse.³³ In the Jewish communities, the emphasis on education for their children of both genders facilitated this assimilation. These children tended to stay in school through high school and very frequently

²⁷ Laura Levitt, “Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism.” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 816.

²⁸ Bruce A. Phillips, “Accounting for Jewish Secularism: Is a New Cultural Identity Emerging?” *Contemporary Jewry* 30:1 (June 2010): 66.

²⁹ Steven J. Gold, “‘The Jazz Singer’ to ‘What a Country!’ a Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18:3 (Spring 1999): 129.

³⁰ Steven J. Gold, “‘The Jazz Singer’ to ‘What a Country!’ a Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18:3 (Spring 1999): 125.

³¹ Steven J. Gold, “‘The Jazz Singer’ to ‘What a Country!’ a Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18:3 (Spring 1999): 118.

³² Allan Mazur, “How Distinct are American Jews?” *Contemporary Jewry* 36:2 (July 2016): 234.

³³ Laura Levitt, “Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism.” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 810.

both daughters and sons went to college.³⁴ Though this assimilation could be seen as a mark of success in their new country, there is – still – for many a sense of loss. As the ethnic neighborhoods diversified and people changed their habits, ethnic groceries, bakeries, and even parish churches closed.

Eastern European Immigration to St. Joseph

Like many boom towns, St. Joseph in the century between 1850 and 1950 was quite diverse. Its growing wealth meant that there were opportunities for people seeking to make better lives and this sense of optimism and growth attracted many immigrants from Eastern Europe. Roughly speaking, these immigrants can be divided along ethnic/religious lines: Jewish and non-Jewish. The vast majority of Jewish people from Eastern Europe³⁵ who came to the city were from areas associated with imperial Russia.³⁶ Most of the non-Jewish Eastern Europeans were Catholic and came from Poland and the Ukraine,

Ethnic Groups

Ukrainian

In the early years of the 20th century, there were approximately 150 Ukrainians living in St. Joseph. Most had come from Horodok-Yaholonskyj, Galacia.³⁷ They had come largely to work in the packing houses of South St. Joseph.

The Ukrainian community was Catholic, but they were unhappy with the Catholic churches that they found in the city. They wanted a church that utilized the Byzantine-Ukrainian Rite which performed the liturgy in Ukrainian. The Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic Church opened at 526 Virginia St. in 1917 on land that had been purchased in 1912.³⁸ It is a small white-frame building with a striking dome and elaborate interior decorations. Some of the early Pastors who served here came from the archdiocese of Winnipeg, Canada.³⁹

In addition to the church, in later years the hall of the Ukrainian American Society at 5801 Lake Avenue served as a center for the community.⁴⁰ The building was purchased in 1958

³⁴ Steven J. Gold, "'The Jazz Singer' to 'What a Country!': a Comparison of Jewish Migration to the United States, 1880-1930 and 1965-1998," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18:3 (Spring 1999): 119, 126-27.

³⁵ These newcomers found a significant and quite successful community of ethnically German Jews already in place. There was some interaction between the two groups, but in many ways they did tend to stay separate from one another. This separation was very clear after death – the ethnic Germans tended to be buried in Adath Joseph cemetery while the Eastern Europeans were laid to rest at Shaare Shalom. Each cemetery was associated with a synagogue in the city.

³⁶ This is a period of shifting national boundaries. This geographical grouping includes Russia, Poland, and Lithuania.

³⁷ Joe Welschemeyer, "Rich Heritage for Ukrainian Church," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 24, 1986, pg. 4D;

³⁸ Joe Welschemeyer, "Rich Heritage for Ukrainian Church," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 24, 1986, pg. 4D; Dave Hon, "Local Ukrainian Church Celebrates 100 Years," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 21, 2017.

³⁹ Joe Welschemeyer, "Rich Heritage for Ukrainian Church," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 24, 1986, pg. 4D;

⁴⁰ Three Gables Preservation, "Ethnic Heritage in St. Joseph," prepared for the St. Joseph Landmark Commission, 1995, 6.

and then sold in 1982. During its relatively short time, the society sponsored a youth choir and taught Ukrainian language classes.⁴¹ Apparently there were more social aspects to events at the Hall as well, in December 1958 the Society applied for a 3/2 beer-by-the-drink license.⁴²

Many of the Ukrainians in St. Joseph returned home after World War I, but a new wave of immigration in the 1920s helped to replenish their numbers. Like those who had come earlier, these newer immigrants tended to work in the packing houses. Their numbers were further augmented by a post-World War II wave of immigration.⁴³

Polish

The Polish community was centered largely in the Goosetown neighborhood. For the Poles, the primary street was Warsaw Street. Most of the Polish community worked either in the packing houses of South St. Joseph or at Devil's Backbone, a substantial brickyard located behind St. Patrick's Church. Others made their livings in the garment factories in downtown. For those who worked in the Southside, transportation from the Goosetown neighborhood to work was difficult. Though there were streetcars running down Messanie Street to the packing house district, most of these workers could not afford to ride them. This prompted some of them to move further south to be closer to their jobs. They established St. Stanislaus Church. The move to the Southside marked the end of the ethnically homogenous community; once there they began to intermarry with the many other groups who lived and worked in that part of St. Joseph.

Goosetown

Goosetown, a neighborhood between Messanie and Lafayette Streets and 17th and 22nd Streets, was an enclave of Poles, Germans, and Swedes in the pre-World War I period. The name came from the large number of residents who raised geese. This neighborhood had the feel of an agricultural village. In addition to raising geese, most residents had their own gardens, smokehouses, and raised chickens.⁴⁴ Life in Goosetown was lively and vibrant. Between 1896 and 1908 they had their own baseball team known as the Goose Town Sluggers. The area was known for being a bit unruly.⁴⁵

The primary street in Goosetown was Olive Street; a glance at the City Directories for the first years of the 20th century gives a wonderful idea of the density and diversity of the area. Olive Street was mixed residential and commercial, with most blocks containing a mixture of both uses. A walk down the street in 1909 would have taken you past the establishments of shoemakers, painters, blacksmiths, barbers, clothing merchants (both new and second hand), drug stores and pharmacies, fuel and feed, cigar manufacturers, and a sheet metal fabricator. And if it was food or drink you were after; Olive Street was the place to get it! Nearly every block had

⁴¹Joe Welschemeyer, "Rich Heritage for Ukrainian Church," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 24, 1986, pg. 4D

⁴²"Untitled," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Dec. 23, 1958, pg. 3.

⁴³Joe Welschemeyer, "Rich Heritage for Ukrainian Church," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 24, 1986, pg. 4D; Three Gables Preservation, "Ethnic Heritage in St. Joseph," prepared for the St. Joseph Landmark Commission, 1995, 6.

⁴⁴Three Gables Preservation, "Ethnic Heritage in St. Joseph," prepared for the St. Joseph Landmark Commission, 1995, 6.

⁴⁵"Feud of a Village," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 11, 1896, pg. 7; "A Boy's Escapade," *St. Joseph Herald*, Sept. 5, 1897, pg. 5; "Accused of Stealing Pups," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 16, 1899, pg. 5.

a neighborhood grocery, there were several saloons, multiple meat merchants, confectioners, and even an ice cream cone manufacturer. These enterprises were owned and operated by people of varying backgrounds, many from Eastern Europe.

On the 1800 block of the street were two businesses operated by the Frank Dubowskys – Sr. and Jr. At 1818 they operated a meat market and at 1802-04 a grocery and meat market and the family lived above the shop. Frank Sr.⁴⁶ was born in Bohemia,⁴⁷ as was his wife Verona. The couple married in 1865 and came to the United States in 1867. The 1900 census shows them living at 1802 Olive Street with seven children between the ages of 9 and 22 (there were two older children who no longer lived with the family). All of the children were born in Missouri. The family were parishioners at SS Peter and Paul Church. In November 1904, Frank Jr. died at the age of 29 of typhoid.⁴⁸

An event on February 15, 1904 illustrates a great deal about the character of Goosetown. That night William Dubowsky, Frank Sr.'s 19-year old son was arrested in the company of Harry Gray, an African American on charges of robbing Paul Szopieray Jr. of \$35 in cash and some jewelry in an Olive St. saloon. In order to get a confession, the young suspects were "put through the sweat box." "According to the facts learned by the officers, Szopieray was found in the closet drunk, by the two men. They carried him into the wine room and laying him on the floor, went through his pockets, taking all his valuables."⁴⁹

⁴⁶ December 3, 1845 – March 20, 1916

⁴⁷ Changing borders make determining precisely where Frank and Verona came from difficult; their death certificates say Austria, in the press they are always referred to as Polish, and the 1900 census says Bohemia.

⁴⁸ An examination of the St. Joseph Death Record Database for the year 1904 shows that this cause of death was very unusual.

⁴⁹ "'Rolled' Drunken Man; Arrested," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 16, 1904, pg. 10.

OLIVE STREET

No. 9 in a series on St. Joseph streets. Olive is a mixture of residence and business sections, colorful and busy.



Musser School, at 24th, will soon be replaced by the new Mark Twain School.



Goose Town! The business district on Olive, extending from 17th to 22d, includes many kinds of stores. Goose Town theoretically extends from 17th to 24th, Lafayette to Messanie. In olden days there was a brick and cement goose pond where the building at extreme right now stands. Nearly every householder in the neighborhood kept geese or ducks.



Olive Street Methodist Church is on the west side of 15th.



Everett School is at 14th street. Once the building housed Junior College.



First Church of the Nazarene is at 11th and Olive.



Early day architecture was unique. This onion-shaped dome is at 19th.



Wyatt Park Assembly of God is at 27th street.



Many new homes have been built in recent years on the eastern part of Olive.

Trash Dumper Caught

Receive 4 No. 1 Ratings at Contest

EVEREST, Kan., April 10 — The

A Picture From the Past



Olive street, from a section starting about Fifteenth street and continuing to Twenty-fourth, has been called Goose Town for years. Today the reason for the nickname is probably unknown to most people. Older residents can recall when many of the people in that section of the city regarded roast goose as the great delicacy, and many of the yards along the street had small bricked ponds in which the

geese could swim. Sometimes the geese would decide to take a walk on the street, as shown in the picture. The coming of the motor car discouraged such walks, however, and eventually the geese disappeared, the little ponds were torn out. This view is to the east, and the Musser School may be seen in the background. The top of the building has been remodeled since this picture was made, about 40 years ago.

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Initially, the Poles, who were overwhelmingly Catholic, attended services at the Immaculate Conception Church. They were dissatisfied with the German-language liturgy and so in 1906 they purchased land at 20th and Messanie Streets facing Warsaw Street and built the “Polish Church,” Saints Peter and Paul. The history of the congregation dates back to at least May 1883 when Bishop John Hogan purchased the Willard Hall homestead for \$5,000. Hogan realized the need for a Roman Catholic Church to serve the needs of the mostly Eastern European residents who lived in the immediate area. Hogan established the Polish speaking parish of Saints Peter and Paul and brought the Reverend Wenecslaus Krsywonos to serve as pastor. Krsywonos, a native of Poland, had recently graduated from Conception Seminary and he served this new congregation from 1883 to 1895. Prior to the construction of the impressive church, the congregation worshipped at the Hall Home.⁵⁰

Jewish

The Jewish community began in St. Joseph in the wake of the 1849. Very quickly they established the Jewish Burial Society and opened Adath Joseph Cemetery. The Adath Joseph congregation began holding services in 1856 in a hall on Felix Street. The congregation did not have a Rabbi, so M. Lehman served as lay leader. The following year they purchased the former Cumberland Presbyterian Church at 6th and Edmond and renovated it for their use. Unfortunately, it burned soon after and the congregation decided to build a synagogue on the Southeast corner of 6th Street and Jules. In 1910 they engaged the services of renowned St. Joseph architect E.J. Eckel and built an imposing structure at 17th and Felix.⁵¹ The members of the Adath Joseph congregation were largely of German ethnicity and considered relatively liberal.

Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe did not arrive in St. Joseph until the late 1880s and they tended to be more conservative than those from Germany. The 1888 and 1889 city directories state that the “Orthodox Jewish Church, Rev. Aaron Hurwitz, Pastor” was meeting at 209 Felix. In 1895 the Shaare Sholem congregation was meeting in a rental hall at 601 Angelique St.⁵² In July 1899, they purchased a lot on which to build at 7th and Patee [725 S. 7th St.] streets. According to the *St. Joseph Herald*, “The congregation of the church is small, numbering only sixty-five members. . . Unlike the Christian and reformed Jewish church, the orthodox Jews have no sermons at their meetings. The services are simple, consisting of the reading of prayers. No rabbi is employed by the church, the different members serving at the gatherings every Saturday.”⁵³

In 1894, the B’nai Yaakov congregation is first referred to by that name. At that time it was meeting at 209 Felix Street. In 1910, the congregation moved into the former Salem Lutheran Church at 1001 S. 12th Street⁵⁴ where it remained until it built at 615 S. 10th St. in the

⁵⁰ Nancy Sandehn, Architectural/Historic Inventory Survey Form. Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, 1992.

⁵¹ “Jewish Context,” unpublished notes in the Historic Preservation Office, Room 107, City Hall, St. Joseph, Mo.

⁵² “Jewish Context,” unpublished notes in the Historic Preservation Office, Room 107, City Hall, St. Joseph, Mo.

⁵³ “New Jewish Temple,” *St. Joseph Herald*, July 13, 1899, pg. 3.

⁵⁴ Demolished in 2021.

heart of a largely Jewish neighborhood. The Congregation established their cemetery in 1918. In 1960 the two conservative congregations merged and met at Temple B'nai Yaakov on 10th St. which was then renamed Temple B'nai Sholem.⁵⁵

The neighborhood around Temple Shaare Sholem at 725 S 7th Street and Temple B'nai Yaakov at 615 S. 10th Street was the heart of the Jewish community in the first half of the 20th century. This densely populated area was home to a large proportion of the city's Jewish citizens – both those of German background (who tended to attend Temple Adath Joseph) and those from Eastern Europe. Like all such neighborhoods, each block had a mixture of commercial and residential structures, with neighborhood groceries on nearly every block.

In the midst of this bustling neighborhood sat a lovely Italianate brick home at 610 S. 10th Street, just across the street from Temple B'nai Yaakov. The house was one of the oldest in the city, having been built in 1853. In 1869 the property was purchased by the clothing merchant David Siegal. David had been born in Berlin and had married Henrietta Hamburger and had three children. The Siegals were prosperous and devout members of the Adath Joseph congregation. David died in 1892, but his family continued to live and prosper at 610. In July 1900, David and Henrietta's daughter Eleanor (Lollie) married Nathan Block, a clothing retailer from a well-to-do German Jewish family. In 1916, Lollie died unexpectedly and as a memorial her family gifted the house she grew up in, 610 S. 10th, to the Federated Jewish Charities of St. Joseph to be used for educational and charitable purposes. It was to be known as the Lollie Siegal Block Memorial House (more commonly known as the Settlement House). The house was used as an educational center to teach new Jewish immigrants, primarily from Eastern Europe, the skills they needed be successful in their new country. It continued to fulfill this purpose until the mid-20th century, when the majority of St. Joseph's Jewish population began to leave the city⁵⁶ and the property was sold in 1965.⁵⁷

Until the mid-20th century, the Jewish community in St. Joseph – both conservative and reformed – was vibrant and growing. In 1919, approximately 3,300 Jewish people lived in the city. By 2018, that number had dropped to fewer than 100.⁵⁸

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⁵⁵ In 2018, the congregation sold the building to Robdiox Resident theater who have since opened the Ruby Theatre in the building.

⁵⁶ Why the exodus occurred is a fascinating question that would be a fruitful topic for further research.

⁵⁷ "Folk Art Houses," Historic St. Joseph Emporium, <https://historicsaintjosephemporium.com/folk-art-houses>

⁵⁸ "A look at the changing Jewish landscape in St. Joseph," *The Kansas City Jewish Chronicle*, Sept. 6, 2018.

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The Anti-Bohunk Campaign of 1908-1909

The term “Bohunk” was a pejorative to refer to people of Eastern European, often specifically Polish, descent. In St. Joseph, the first apparent use of the term in the newspaper occurred on March 21, 1908 in an article in the *St. Joseph Gazette* entitled “Barada, Station’s First Bridegroom, Again in Cell, Though Wounded.”⁵⁹ The article was a fairly ordinary account of a fight between two men in Southside⁶⁰ with the twist that one of the men got married while in custody. The fight was between Charles Barada (the erstwhile bridegroom) and Tony Bechek, a Polish immigrant. According to the newspaper the two were in a pool hall when Bechek bumped into Barada causing the latter to exclaim, “Get out of the way you Bohunk.” This was the first instance of what became a near fixation in the press and among city officials on the Bohunks of the Southside.

Eastern European Immigration/ The Bohunks

More than two million immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe came to the United States in the period between 1880 and the First World War. It was during this period that a shift in immigration patterns to the United States occurred; no longer were the bulk of immigrants coming from Western Europe, rather the “new immigrants” originated from Southern and Eastern Europe.⁶¹ Because they tended to come from small town and villages where the primary means of making a living was agriculture, they did not bring with them skills that would allow them to enter the work force at anything much above the lowest, unskilled end.⁶² This held true for those who made their way to St. Joseph, Missouri. It was estimated in the fall of 1908 that between 2,000 and 3,000 “Bohunks” were living in Southside and working in the packing houses.⁶³

During this period of intense immigration, Anglo-American believed that the Eastern and Southern Europeans constituted a threat to the American way of life. They were perceived as

⁵⁹ “Barada, Station’s First Bridegroom, Again in Cell, Though Wounded,” *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 21, 1908, pg. 2.

⁶⁰ The area of south St. Joseph, around the stockyards and packing plants, is generally referred to as Southside or the South End.

⁶¹ Tim Prchal, “The Bohemian Paradox: ‘My Antonia’ and Popular Images of Czech Immigrants,” *MELUS* 29:2 (Summer 2004): 5-6.

⁶² Karel D. Bicha, “Hunkies: Stereotyping the Slavic Immigrants, 1890-1920,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2:1 (Fall 1982): 16, 21; Dale E. Peterson, “The American Adamic: Immigrant Bard of Diversity,” *The Massachusetts Review* 44:1/2 (Spring-Summer 2003): 235.

⁶³ “Plan a Mission Among Bohunks,” *St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 21, 1908, pg. 5.

This concentration of Eastern European, Bohunk, labor in the packing houses brings to mind the conditions in Upton Sinclair's ground-breaking novel, *The Jungle*. This book was published in 1906 and centered on the experience of a Lithuanian immigrant family working in the packing houses of Chicago. Given the close relationship between the St. Joseph and Chicago livestock/packing industries one must wonder what conditions these people faced.

distinctly other: they were not Protestant;⁶⁴ they did not speak English; their standard of living differed from "respectable" Americans -- in short, Americans saw them as uncivilized.⁶⁵ Thomas Napierkowski, a scholar specializing in the Polish-American community, asserts that American popular culture characterized Polish immigrants as crude and ignorant, "the inevitable inference of such treatment is that Polish Americans are a people without culture, tradition, or manners."⁶⁶ Somewhat counterintuitively, for a people who were seen to be without any real culture, Eastern European immigrants were also seen as being particularly resistant to assimilation.⁶⁷

There is some debate about the origin of the term "Bohunk," but many scholars believe that it emerged as a contraction between the words "Bohemian"⁶⁸ and "Hungarian." It seems to have been coined in the Pennsylvania coal mines during the 1880s and implied a combination of physical strength and mental weakness.⁶⁹ This combination of excessive brawn and defective brains was believed to instill a violent temperament in Eastern Europeans.⁷⁰

All of these stereotypes were present in St. Joseph and informed the Anti-Bohunk campaign of 1908-1909. The city was experiencing a marked increase in immigrants from Eastern Europe, many of whom were single men (or men who had left their families behind) who went to work in the packing houses. As the "respectable" citizens of St. Joseph looked to the south, they viewed what they saw with marked ambivalence: on one hand, the livestock industry in the Southside made many of the citizens very wealthy men; on the other hand, the type of work that was being done there and the conditions that those who performed that work lived and worked in was utterly beyond their comprehension. This equivocal attitude can be found running through the events of those two years.

Local Violence Against the Bohunks

Despite, or perhaps because, of the diversity of the population in the Southside, there were occasional flashes of anti-immigrant violence. On May 16, 1908, the *St. Joseph Observer* ran a short piece, "It cost Jerry Murphy \$70⁷¹ to take one good hard punch at a 'Bohunk's' face in the South End Thursday. Jerry imbibed the liquid extract of the grape to such an extent that he

⁶⁴ Generally, they were Roman or Greek Catholic, Orthodox Christian, or Jewish.

⁶⁵ Alter, Peter T. "Mexicans and Serbs in Southeast Chicago: Racial Group Formation during the Twentieth Century," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94:4 (Winter 2001/02): 404.

⁶⁶ Quoted in James S. Pula, "Image, Status, Mobility, and Integration in American Society: The Polish Experience." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16:1, (Fall, 1996): 76.

⁶⁷ Tim Prchal, "The Bohemian Paradox: 'My Antonia' and Popular Images of Czech Immigrants," *MELUS* 29:2 (Summer 2004): 4.

⁶⁸ Bohemian generally referred to Czechs. Tim Prchal, "The Bohemian Paradox: 'My Antonia' and Popular Images of Czech Immigrants," *MELUS* 29:2 (Summer 2004): 3.

⁶⁹ James S. Pula, "Image, Status, Mobility, and Integration in American Society: The Polish Experience." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16:1, (Fall, 1996): 77.

⁷⁰ Tim Prchal, "The Bohemian Paradox: 'My Antonia' and Popular Images of Czech Immigrants," *MELUS* 29:2 (Summer 2004): 13.

⁷¹ This was not an insignificant fine; in 2021 dollars it is the equivalent of just over \$2,000.

felt capable of cleaning all the 'Bohunks' or foreigners out of St. Joseph."⁷² On April 2, 1908 the *St. Joseph News Press* reported that "Foreigners who asked for work assaulted in the public street. A party of twenty-four foreigners, on a stampede, caused considerable excitement about the Exchange building,⁷³ soon after 7 o'clock this morning. They had been to the packing house to report for duty. There being no work today for them, they started for their homes when they were attacked by five or six young roughs who have an aversion to what they term "Bohunks." Flying bricks soon put them on the run. No one was hurt."⁷⁴ A similar altercation happened on August 6, 1908 when two young men threw stones at men they referred to as Bohunks near the Hammond Packing Plant. A few days later, Charles Burkley and Fred Wills were arrested for throwing stones at the immigrants.⁷⁵ According to the police stationed in the area, this type of activity had been happening with regularity.⁷⁶

The anti-Bohunk violence continued into the summer of 1909. That August three men, after imbibing sufficient alcohol to get their courage up, "invaded the Bohunk settlement and proceeded to go into several houses unbidden and notify the inmates that it was time to vamoose." Initially the residents were frightened, but soon the women banded together and chased the three men out of the neighborhood. "After a hot run over into the stock yards with the pursuing crowd increasing in numbers all the time, Summers was run to earth in one of the cattle alleys in the yards and he was soon landed where the Bohunk women could not get at him." The three men⁷⁷ were arrested and charged.⁷⁸ A large crowd of Eastern Europeans went to the police station to identify the three as the men who had caused the trouble.⁷⁹

Eastern European immigrants were often seen as a source of cheap labor and thus native workers frequently saw them as unwelcome competition.⁸⁰ This was certainly the case in St. Joseph. In the early summer of 1908, complaints appeared in the press alleging that the packing houses of the Southside were systematically firing resident laborers and hiring immigrants in their place.⁸¹ The complaints alleged that this preferential treatment being given to the immigrants was doubly detrimental in that not only were native workers being put out of work, but also, the immigrants tended not to spend their wages in local businesses, but rather they lived exceedingly cheaply so that they could send much of their pay back to their families in their home nations.⁸²

On May 22, 1908 Robert Richardson stood in police court and was convicted of vagrancy; authorities alleged that he had not worked for nearly two months. His defense was that he attempted to secure work, but the preferential treatment being meted out to the Bohunks made it impossible: "I have stood in line at the packing houses every morning but the Bohunks have

⁷² Untitled, *St. Joseph Observer*, May 16, 1908, pg. 2.

⁷³ The Livestock Exchange Building, 601 Illinois Avenue.

⁷⁴ "Attacked by Toughs," *St. Joseph News Press*, April 2, 1908, pg. 2.

⁷⁵ "Annoyed 'Bohunks'", *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 19, 1908, pg. 8.

⁷⁶ "'Bohunks' Stoned by Young America," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 7, 1908, pg. 6.

⁷⁷ Albert Summers, George Chamberlain and Clarence Leighty; all from the Southside.

⁷⁸ "Near Riot in Bohunktown," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 6, 1909, pg. 10.

⁷⁹ "Three Youths are Held," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 7, 1909, pg. 7.

⁸⁰ Karel D. Bich, "Hunkies: Stereotyping the Slavic Immigrants, 1890-1920," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2:1 (Fall 1982): 16-38.

⁸¹ "Grocers Start Fight Against 'Undesirables,'" *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 20, 1908, pg. 1.

⁸² "Grocers Start Fight Against 'Undesirables,'" *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 20, 1908, pg. 1.

been given work in preference. I got a little work driving a delivery wagon, but it did not last long. I am an expert hog butcher. That is my business, but I cannot get employment at that kind of work. The packing houses are filled with foreigners – ‘Bohunks’ – who will work for small wages.” Richardson’s story was supported by the testimony of Mike Wittowski (whom the *News Press* takes pains to point out “has lived in America since he was a child.”) who stated that he had been at the packing houses three days that week and that he saw Richardson there each day looking for work but that the Bohunks were given work before local labor.⁸³

Tension over jobs erupted again in late February 1909 when a group described as Bohunks were attacked near the gates of the packing house district. The *Gazette* seemed to be sympathetic to the plight of the victims, describing the attackers as "a dozen white hoodlums" who "lay in wait" to launch an ambush.⁸⁴

These complaints that the immigrants were taking jobs from Americans prompted the Bradley Law in early 1909, which was intended to mandate that at least 90% of the workforce of an enterprise must be citizens.⁸⁵

It was not only the perception that the Eastern Europeans were taking jobs from local labor that made the people of the Southside angry, they also alleged that the "ignorance" of the Bohunks made the packing houses more unsafe. In April 1909 Monford D. Robinson, an employee at Swift and Company sued the company for \$2,000 alleging that the "carelessness and negligence on the part of a Bohunk, who could not talk English, in allowing a number of cattle heads to run down a chute" caused him significant injury.⁸⁶ Robinson alleged that Swift was negligent in employing a man who could not understand English.⁸⁷

Though often there was violence directed against the immigrant community, the Eastern European immigrant community had a reputation for drinking and fighting⁸⁸. On May 23, 1908 the *St. Joseph Observer* observed that “The ‘Bohunks’ or Poles as the South St. Joseph people term them, seem to have nothing but a fighting and killing carnival this week, seems as if all the Polish citizens of this city are on a fighting mad humor, caused probably by the spring fever.”⁸⁹ On January 4, 1909, the *Gazette* carried a story about a drinking party gone bad: "Following a payday liquid celebration at 333 W. Kansas Avenue at 1:30 o'clock yesterday morning, John Calda⁹⁰ became abusive and tried to whip Thomas Thirteen,⁹¹ another bohunk. Thirteen seized a Winchester and pumped several shots at his aggressor, who is said to have been under a bed,

⁸³ "Workmen Complain of Discrimination," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 22, 1908, pg. 1.

⁸⁴ "Assaults on Bohunk," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Feb. 28, 1909, pg. 11.

⁸⁵ "First Senate Bill Would Hit Bohunks," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 3, 1909, pg. 1.

⁸⁶ "Ignorance of Bohunks Cause Alleged Injury to Packing House Employee," *St. Joseph Gazette*, April 16, 1909, pg. 10.

⁸⁷ "'Bohunks' An Issue in Suit for Damage," *St. Joseph News Press*, April 16, 1909, pg. 4.

⁸⁸ American tended to see them as violent, uncivilized and clannish. Alter, Peter T. "Mexicans and Serbs in Southeast Chicago: Racial Group Formation during the Twentieth Century," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94:4 (Winter 2001/02): 405.

⁸⁹ Untitled article, *St. Joseph Observer*, May 23, 1908, pg. 5.

⁹⁰ 333 W. Kansas Ave. was the home of Calda (he was a boarder), who was a laborer at the Hammond Packing House. The Street Directory in the 1909 City Directory lists 333 as the home of William Cole and John Newell (though under Calda, he is listed as living there).

⁹¹ Despite the article making a big deal about the notoriety of Thirteen's name, no records of him can be found in the city.

although Thirteen thought he was running through the yard."⁹² In fact, the Bohunks were so well known for drinking and fighting, that when they were not doing that it was news. On Jan. 5, 1909 the *St. Joseph Gazette* ran an article entitled, "Police Have Ennui: Not Enough Doing to Keep Blood in Circulation." It started with "There was not enough trouble in the South End from Saturday night until yesterday to keep the police blood in healthy circulation. Bohunks did not dally with the festive bones in crap games, nor were any of them found playing hay mow seven-up for small change."⁹³

Not only were the Bohunks thought to be violent drunks, but they were said to be cheats as well. A doctor in the Southside reported bitterly that the community had learned that they did not have to pay their medical bills because the government or charities would cover the costs. He went on to state, "It is an established fact that these foreigners have money to pay their fines when they are arrested for any law violation. If they don't happen to have the money they have plenty of friends among their own people who get it for them in a short time. If they can pay bills of that nature, they certainly can pay for their medical treatment."⁹⁴ In February 1909 the *Gazette* ran an article about how some of the Bohunks had learned "the boarding house tricks of certain American people who board for a living and jump their bills every now and then."⁹⁵

The term Bohunk was a term of racial derision; calling someone a Bohunk was "fighting words." In June 1908 Trangott Wyss, an immigrant from Switzerland got himself arrested for assaulting William McSparren. When Wyss was asked to explain himself, he stated, "He called me a bohunk. I may be a foreigner, but I ain't no bohunk. I been in this country for twenty years, and I have my papers."⁹⁶ Bohunks were clearly seen as a source of disorder, a reputation that likely helped to cause the anti-Bohunk campaign that was soon to get underway.

One does find racially charged language and descriptions used in describing the Polish and Eastern European immigrants. Judge Aillee's statements that the Bohunks need to act like "white men," is jarring to twenty-first century ears. Sometimes the derision was cloaked in the mantle of "good fun." The *St. Joseph Gazette* ran a "funny" piece called "Good Mornin' Judge." On August 20, 1908 the column told the fictional story: "Court was closed yesterday morning after only two cases had been heard. Patrolman Gray, who was acting as baliff, was just about to read the names of two Bohunk prisoners, Ugtfcgh Vczghwxyaki and Gckooxko Ptomikkezk..."⁹⁷ The difficulty of the Eastern European accent was also the topic of an article about the difficulties that the railroad ticket sellers faced when trying to understand what the immigrants are trying to say.⁹⁸

⁹² "Name Enough, Says Thomas Thirteen," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 4, 1909, pg. 1.

⁹³ "Police Have Ennui: Not Enough Doing to Keep Blood in Circulation," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 5, 1909, pg. 3. The article went on to state that "The only wickedness discovered was at 4713 King hill Avenue, where Sadie Lucia, Orpha Offeld, and M.L. Coy got too hilarious in a mixup with can beer. They were gathered in on a charge of peace disturbance.:"

⁹⁴ "'Bohunks' Getting Wise," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 21, 1909, pg. 2.

⁹⁵ "Sergeant Sweats, Jerry Hilarious," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Feb. 7, 1909, pg. 2.

⁹⁶ "Called Him A 'Bohunk,'" *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 7, 1908, pg. 5.

⁹⁷ "'Good Mornin' Judge," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 20, 1908, pg. 4.

⁹⁸ "Puzzle Ticket Sellers," *St. Joseph News Press*, December 11, 1908, pg. 20.

Boarding Houses

The tendency of Eastern European immigrants to live in boarding houses was a source of widespread condemnation, not just in St. Joseph, but across the country. Rent in the boarding houses was relatively low and the squalid conditions were seen as a temporary inconvenience as the men saved money (generally they sent it back to families still in their home country) so that they could return to their native towns as persons with property and status.⁹⁹ This tolerance for substandard living conditions led to a general belief that Eastern Europeans tended to be, as a group, squalid in their habits.¹⁰⁰

The boarding houses had greater attractions than simply being inexpensive; they tended to be run by immigrant women and so offered a taste of what they had left behind. The food, the music, the sociability would all have reminded the men of home.¹⁰¹

The anti-Bohunk campaign in South St. Joseph was centered on conditions in the boarding houses in the Southside. City officials became convinced that the sanitary conditions there were far below what was acceptable and that they were a potential source for disease. One of the earliest accounts of concerns about the boarding houses came about at the end of July 1908. Neighbors of a boarding house on Harvard Street (a short street in the heart of the Southside, not far from the packing house district) became incensed that the property was being rented to "a number of bohunks." It was asserted that having such people as neighbors would reduce their property values and make the neighborhood "an undesirable section in which to live." The newspaper account of the protest goes on to state that "an effort has been made to segregate them [the immigrants], which has been very successful in the past, and this move on their part to get into the better residence districts is meeting with a great deal of hostility. Some of the real estate dealers refuse to rent property to them."¹⁰²

The Bohunks were a matter of concern for St. Joseph officialdom. In 1908, Otto Theisen,¹⁰³ a candidate for sheriff, told the South End Democrats that if he were elected he would help them drive the Bohunks out of the district.¹⁰⁴ Inspectors associated with the Department of Health were on the front lines of the fight against bohunk filth.¹⁰⁵ The City physician E.S. Ballard played an important role. One of the tools used in the crusade was the regulation that all boarding house proprietors must have a license (for which they paid \$10 per

⁹⁹ Karel D. Bicha, "Hunkies: Stereotyping the Slavic Immigrants, 1890-1920," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2:1 (Fall 1982): 24-26.

¹⁰⁰ Karel D. Bicha, "Hunkies: Stereotyping the Slavic Immigrants, 1890-1920," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 2:1 (Fall 1982): 23.

¹⁰¹ Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017), 99.

¹⁰² "Again the 'Bohunks,'" *St. Joseph News Press*, July 31, 1908, pg. 2.

¹⁰³ Theisen (Feb. 26, 1873- Dec. 5, 1934) himself was born in St. Joseph to German immigrants. He was successful in his run for sheriff. Like the Bohunks he was a Catholic.

¹⁰⁴ "'Bohunks' Stoned by Young America," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 7, 1908, pg. 6

¹⁰⁵ Among those were E.K. Hess, John Purkett, and Robert Hart.

year); this was enforced by Harry Luchsinger, the license inspector.¹⁰⁶ On the City Council, members Clark, Morrison, and Ackerly sat on the Board of Health

In the first week of August 1908 the anti-Bohunk campaign kicked off after inspectors from the board of health went to a boarding house at 117 Texas Avenue to investigate what had caused three cases of typhoid fever in the house simultaneously. What they found when they investigated the house horrified them: "According to the inspectors, they discovered the house to have six rooms, yet in these crowded quarters four families, comprising twenty persons, slept, ate, and lived. Filth is said to have met the officers at every turn and the air was close and foul. Dirty faced children gamboled about the floor while their still dirtier elders complacently sat around and talked. In the rear of the house the kitchen was littered with dishes and fragments of food. In the yard, within ten feet of the kitchen, was an unused well that fairly reeked with grease and slops." The inspectors were directed to force the property owner to clean up the property and to compel some of the residents to move.¹⁰⁷

On August 13, the crusade was well underway. Four representatives of the Department of Health¹⁰⁸ headed into the Southside to investigate the sanitary conditions there. By 2:00 p.m. they had inspected 26 houses and burned eleven mattresses that were deemed unsanitary. At a house at 5206 King Hill Avenue they found four double beds and two pallets in one 12 x 14 foot room. Twelve men were sleeping there. A four-room house on Michigan Avenue was home to twenty-seven men and one woman. Due to the overcrowding that they found they issued the following decree: "Large rooms shall not contain more than two beds, and not more than two persons shall sleep in a bed. Small rooms shall not contain more than one bed, and not more than two persons shall sleep in a bed."¹⁰⁹ By the end of the day, the quartet had burned 38 mattresses and collected \$200 in license fees when twenty boarding house proprietors paid for their licenses.¹¹⁰

Steve Lutts, who ran the boarding house at 326 Ohio St. refused to pay for his business license and was arrested and made to pay a \$5 fine. At his trial there were two interpreters: one working for the city and one for Lutts who was making sure that the city interpreter was translating correctly. Lutts testified that he had seventeen boarders, each of whom was charged

¹⁰⁶ As proof that things do not change, one of the primary tools currently being used by the City of St. Joseph in its struggle against sub-standard rental units is the requirement that landlords have a business license. Then as now, not every landlord was willing to comply. Steve Lutts, the owner of 326 Ohio St., a small four-room house where inspectors found 17 people living, refused to pay for his license and was arrested. "Eleven Beds in House," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 15, 1908, pg. 8.

¹⁰⁷ "Filthy House is Home for Twenty," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 7, 1908, pg. 4; "Typhoid Fever is Raging," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 8, 1908, pg. 6.

¹⁰⁸ License Inspector Harry Luchsinger, Sanitary Inspector E.K. Hess and his assistants, John Purkett and Robert Hart.

¹⁰⁹ "News of South End," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 13, 1908, pg. 2.

¹¹⁰ "Eleven Beds in House," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 15, 1908, pg. 8; "Bohunks Pay License: 'Undesireables' Pay Fee to Run Boarding House," *St. Joseph News Press/Gazette*, August 14, 1908, pg. 5.

\$1.50 per week.¹¹¹ When Judge Ailee fined him, Lutts retorted that he was going to return to his home country.¹¹²

On the evening of August 19, inspector Robert Hart was in the Southside inspecting more boarding houses when he "happened" to run in to three city councilmen who sat on the Board of Health. He invited Councilmen Clark, Morrison, and Ackerly to accompany him to a boarding house on Kansas Avenue. "The sights they saw were repugnant and filthy. In a cellar three beds furnished sleeping accommodations for eight Bohunks. Two of the beds were in execrable condition and were taken out and burned. The frantic occupants were warned to thin out and told that more than four in one room and more than two in one bed would result in arrest hereafter. Their belongings were ordered removed from the cellar." At the end of the inspection five men had nowhere to sleep for the night.¹¹³

Reports of bad conditions due to overcrowding were frequently found in the news. On Jan. 13, 1909 the *News Press* reported that the police were concerned about a small house on King Hill Avenue that had been rented by "about 100 'Bohunks'." In order to make room for all of them, a dugout had been excavated in a big hill in the back yard where many of the men slept.¹¹⁴

Concerns about the conditions in the bohunk boarding houses continued into the next year; on January 22 the board of health announced that it would continue with the campaign against the Polish boardinghouses "until everyone of the shacks occupied by the foreigners is cleaned up." The board further expressed its frustration that its orders were not being complied with; none of the unsanitary mattresses that they had ordered destroyed had been and the conditions in the boarding houses were just as bad as when the crusade had begun. The *Gazette* summed up the situation: "The board realizes that it has a hard task to perform in cleaning up South St. Joseph, and it has decided that the best way to do it is to go slowly and deliberately, taking the Bohunks one at a time, if necessary, until they decide to spruce up."¹¹⁵ The *News Press*, covering the same board of health meeting, stating that the "Bohunks in the South End will not be permitted to rest until they declare a general season of cleaning up, and make their homes thoroughly satisfactory to the city sanitary inspectors. The board of health discussed the foreigners last night, and agreed that they should not be persecuted but that they should be watched closely and made gradually to conform to all the health regulations laid down by the city."¹¹⁶

The concerns voiced at that time have a very familiar ring to anyone who is paying attention to the current debate over immigration policy. Councilman Clark, who was president of the Board of Health, declared on January 5, "The men should be shut out altogether because they do not intend to become naturalized citizens. The Texas legislature has taken action in similar

¹¹¹ That is approximately \$43.00 in 2021 dollars.

¹¹² "Bohunks Pay License: 'Undesireables' Pay Fee to Run Boarding House," *St. Joseph News Press/Gazette*, August 14, 1908, pg. 5.

¹¹³ "Bohunks' Bad Beds Burned By Board," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 19, pg. 8; "Beds are Burned," *St. Joseph News Press* Aug. 19, 1908, pg. 8.

¹¹⁴ "Hot After 'Bohunks'," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 13, 1909, pg. 7.

¹¹⁵ "Bohunks Ignore Clean Up Order," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 22, 1908, pg. 1.

¹¹⁶ "They Must Clean Up," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 22, 1909, pg. 6.

cases keeping this class of men from its border."¹¹⁷ The news article went on to state, "Those familiar with the habits of the Bohunks say that their living expenses are not much more than \$1 a week. The rest of their wages are saved and sent to the old country, where the men have left their families. After enough has been accumulated to purchase a home or farm over there the men go back and others take their place."¹¹⁸ In May 1908 a committee formed by local grocers found that "more than \$1,200 is sent from the South End to foreign countries each week, and that those of the undesirable element exist on an average of \$1.20 per week."¹¹⁹

Councilman Clark was assisted in his quest to clean up the area inhabited by the Polish immigrants by Dr. J.H. McCoy, the assistant city physician. On Jan. 12 the Gazette quoted him as saying, "I have lived in Chicago and circulated in a professional capacity in the 'Ghetto, little Italy,' and other quarters of that great city and I never saw anything the equal of those Bohunk quarters in South St. Joseph. The filthy conditions down there are simply indescribable. I visited about twenty-five houses and find all in filthy and unsanitary condition, but the one that is too bad to get into print is the one at Cherokee and King Hill avenues. I have simply served notice on the tenants and the agents who rent these houses that they must correct existing conditions or I will put a quarantine card on the houses, close them up and destroy the bedding and I mean to do just what I told them I would."¹²⁰

Dr. McCoy's horror at the conditions at the house at Cherokee and King Hill Avenue resulted in ten of the occupants¹²¹ being compelled to appear in the police court to answer charges of violating the sanitary ordinances. Each of the men had to put up a bond of \$10.¹²² These ten all pleaded guilty on the charge of maintaining a nuisance and were fined \$10. They asked for clemency stating that they had cleaned up the property, but the court refused. Judge Ailee said to their attorney Hugh Neville, "Tell these Bohunks, if you are able to speak their lingo, that they had better clean up and live like white men. They cannot bring their filthy ways here. In St. Joseph they must live like Americans."¹²³ The January 15 *News Press* ran an article entitled "The 'Bohunks' Scatter" in which it reported with some glee that the crusade in the Southside seemed to be having some effect. "The crusade of the city health officers the first of the week which resulted in several 'Bohunks' being arrested and fined for the unsanitary condition in which they were living, has had the effect of scattering them in every direction, and thinning them out to a marked degree. The bunch of fifty that was living in the flats at King Hill and Cherokee avenues, secured a wagon with a hog frame on it Thursday afternoon, and carted their trunks and bundles to South Sixth street, where a new settlement will be established."¹²⁴

The racial/nativist nature of this quest to clean up the Polish immigrant houses is made clear by a statement by Dr. McCoy, the assistant city physician, who in January 1909 declared

¹¹⁷ "Board Considers Bohunk Question," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 5, 1909, pg. 6.

¹¹⁸ "Board Considers Bohunk Question," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 5, 1909, pg. 6.

¹¹⁹ Grocers Start Fight Against 'Undesirables,'" *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 20, 1908, pg. 1.

¹²⁰ "Will Quarantine Bohunks, He Says," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 12, 1909, pg. 3.

¹²¹ /those chared were Christ Lack, John Donoghue, Peter Semare, Thomas Lucas, Gus Richard, Thomas Stamara, George Felix, Philip Cunerty, George Rapp, and Chris Lang.

¹²² "Hot After 'Bohunks'," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 13, 1909, pg. 7; "Indorse Health Order: South End Supports Campaign for Cleaner Bohunks," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 13, 1909, pg. 3.

¹²³ "Ten 'Bohunks' Are Fined," *St. Joseph News Press*, January 20, 1909, pg. 2.

¹²⁴ "The 'Bohunks' Scatter: Crusade of Health Officers has a Salutory Effect," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 15, 1909, pg. 12.

that it was his plan to continue to fight against the substandard living conditions "until he compels this filthy element to either clean up and *live like American citizens* [emphasis added] or get out."¹²⁵ On January 13 the *Gazette* reported, "The action of the city health department in compelling the Bohunk colony to clean up and live more like American citizens meets general approval in South End circles."¹²⁶ The campaign may have had support, but there was some indication that at least some in the press were beginning to see it as somewhat ridiculous. On February 17 the *Gazette* ran a short piece: "Again the health board has decided that the Bohunk colony must be kept clean. The chief trouble appears to be that the Bohunks do not have time to attend the board meetings."¹²⁷

The bad conditions were not found only in the Southside, on January 23, 1909 a fire at 711 S. 8th Street brought to light unsanitary conditions in the house. The home contained ten rooms and nearly fifty people were found to be living there.¹²⁸

By the Spring and Summer of 1909, the sanitation campaign had largely run its course. Once in a while, public officials would make some small-scale attempts to clean up the area, but it did not gain the traction that it had had earlier.¹²⁹

Fear of Disease

On August 8, 1908 the *St. Joseph News Press* trumpeted that "Typhoid Fever is Raging."¹³⁰ It was this threat of contagious disease that provided the officials with the justification for their crusade. In January 1909, Councilman Clark, the President of the Board of Health and a leader in the anti-Bohunk crusade stated, "These men live in such crowded quarters that they might prove a menace to the other people of the South end. They live in an unsanitary manner and we will try and do something to change the present conditions. The men are overcrowded for one thing. If disease should break out among them, it would spread rapidly."¹³¹

In January Dr. J.H. McCoy, the assistant city physician, became very concerned about conditions among the Poles in the Southside. Dr. McCoy asserted that the severe overcrowding there would lead to disease. He stated, "I found that two shifts of eighteen men were occupying a two-room house on Dakota avenue, and live in a filthy manner. . . Such things as this will lead to a dangerous epidemic in a short time. That is the reason we are after the Bohunks."¹³²

In addition to typhoid and, there was concern about trachoma, a highly contagious bacterial infection that causes granulation on the inner surface of the eyelids. This was first

¹²⁵ "Will Quarantine Bohunks, He Says," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 12, 1909, pg. 3

¹²⁶ "Indorse Health Order: South End Supports Campaign for Cleaner Bohunks," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 13, 1909, pg. 3.

¹²⁷ Untitled, *St. Joseph Gazette*, Feb. 17, 1909, pg. 6.

¹²⁸ "Fifty in Ten Rooms," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 23, 1909, pg. 1.

¹²⁹ "Clean-Up Campaign," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Aug. 20, 1909, pg. 3.

¹³⁰ "Typhoid Fever is Raging," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 8, 1908, pg. 6. It is worth noting that despite all of the frenzied reporting about the prevalence of typhoid and other similar diseases, death records held by the St. Joseph Public Library do not indicate any increase in the number of deaths attributed to these diseases in this period.

¹³¹ "Board Considers Bohunk Question," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 5, 1909, pg. 6.

¹³² "Hot After 'Bohunks'," *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 13, 1909, pg. 7.

mentioned in January 1909, when Dr. Ballard reported that it was spreading through the Bohunk boarding houses because the men shared towels. This prompted the Health Department to consider requiring that the houses provide individual towels for the residents.¹³³ The danger of trachoma became a matter of concern for the school board in early February 1909. The *Gazette's* account of the February 8 meeting contained the following: "A condition growing out of the filthy conditions in which the Bohunks living in the South End came up last evening in a very pronounced manner, when it was moved that the same rule that applies to contagious diseases be made to apply to the condition of granulated eyelids. It is known that numerous Bohunks are afflicted with sore eyes and that the disease that affects them is contagious."¹³⁴

In the summer the city chemist, W.B. Kelling stated that the water that many of the Eastern Europeans were drinking in the Southend was contaminated and that contamination was the cause of the outbreak of illness centered on a boarding house at 333 Kansas Avenue.¹³⁵

Cutting off the Carp

In early 1909 the crusade against the Bohunk boarding houses continued, but that did not mean that the powers that be in St. Joseph were satisfied with that approach to making life difficult for the Eastern European immigrants in the Southside. Their next target were the vendors who sold carp to the Polish families. The carp crusade began in the first week of January when a cold snap threatened to make carp, which were caught in Lake Contrary, difficult to obtain.¹³⁶

Vendors selling the inexpensive fish lined up along Illinois Avenue in the packing house district of the Southend.¹³⁷ In the Spring it seems that complaints about this trade took the place of complaining about the boarding house conditions among those who wished to complain about the Eastern Europeans. "For a long time there has been much complaint of the fish peddlers lining up on Illinois Avenue between the junction and the railroad tracks to vend their stocks of carp and other cheap varieties of fish. The Bohunks were the standard and reliable customers for the wagon loads of carp and the sight of the Bohunks was pretty near as exasperating to the Illinois residents and business men as were the loud smelling carp."¹³⁸

On March 26 the board of public works served notice on the vendors that they had to either obtain - and pay for - a regular peddlers' license or cease their trade on Illinois. Within hours of receiving the notice, most of the peddlers had vacated their regular positions; however, many just moved across the railroad tracks to the area that was outside of city limits and

¹³³ Board Considers Bohunk Question," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 5, 1909, pg. 6.

¹³⁴ "School Board Just Won't Let Smith Resign," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Feb. 9, 1909, pg. 6.

¹³⁵ "Bilious Bohunks Blame Billion Brown Bacteria Which Cavorted in Water," *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 17, 1909, pg. 1.

¹³⁶ "Bad for Bohunks: Cold Weather Cuts Off Supply of Carp," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 7, 1909, pg. 5.

¹³⁷ "Grouch and the Carp," *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 21, 1909 pg. 2.

¹³⁸ "Fish Peddlers Forced to Move," *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 27, 1909, pg. 7.

recommenced their trade in front of the stock yards and the area around the Livestock Exchange building.¹³⁹

The fish peddlers remained outside of city limits for about two weeks, but by April 10, some of them decided that the time had come to reclaim their usual positions. Max Munken was the first to defy the order, "He was driving a lively business, as the Bohunk population was fish hungry, when along came two policemen and demanded that Max show his license. He could not show it and deposited \$5.50 with the police for his appearance in court."¹⁴⁰

Enough is Enough/ Saving the Bohunks

Conditions of the immigrants in the Southside were grim enough that they tugged at the proper heartstrings of the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church. In October 1908 they announced plans to undertake missionary activity¹⁴¹ among the Bohunks.¹⁴² The ladies went so far as to engage the services of a "lady interpreter" who was expected to arrive in the city around January and who would be assisted by local women "until converts can be secured to help her."¹⁴³ Unfortunately, there are no further mentions of this endeavor in the press, so it is not clear if the ladies actually ventured into the frightening wilds of the South End. In Chicago it was the Baptists who undertook the charge of attempting to "save" the Eastern Europeans. The Baptist church there believed that "the Baptist faith would Christianize" the immigrants.¹⁴⁴ The patronizing nature of these missionary attempts is made abundantly clear when one remembers that the vast majority of the immigrants targeted were Catholic.

By the beginning of March 1909, it appeared that the anti-Bohunk campaign was having some success. The Eastern Europeans were not necessarily cleaning up their living conditions, but they were seemingly vacating the Southside. A newspaper account stated, "It is a mooted question with South End residents whether it is a case of going visiting or an immigration for a more congenial clime, where sanitary officers and brick bats do not meddle with them, but the Bohunk tide has been flowing away from South St. Joseph for the past few days. Not less than twenty-five or thirty of the foreigners have faded from the colony since last Sunday. . . Experience of the past winter has shown the Bohunk population to be deficient in the matter of

¹³⁹ "Fish Peddlers Forced to Move," *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 27, 1909, pg. 7.

¹⁴⁰ "Fish Men Appear Again; Arrested," *St. Joseph Gazette*, April 10, 1909, pg. 7. Munken appeared in police court on April 20 and was found guilty and ordered to pay \$10 fine. "Munken Had to Pay," *St. Joseph News-Press*, April 20, 1909, pg. 12.

¹⁴¹ Defined as teaching them about the life of Jesus and holding Sunday School. There is a real irony here when one considers that the vast majority of the Bohunks were Catholic and the Catholic Church had a strong presence in the Southside.

¹⁴² Generally the term Bohunk was used to refer to Polish immigrants, the Presbyterian ladies were more concerned with immigrants from Bohemia. This emphasis is likely do to the fact that the plan had been suggested by Reverend V.N. Edwards, who had experience with the Bohemian population in Pittsburgh. This is a good indication of the slippery nature of the term. "Plan a Mission Among Bohunks," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 21, 1908, pg. 5.

¹⁴³ "Plan a Mission Among Bohunks," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 21, 1908, pg. 5.

¹⁴⁴ Alter, Peter T. "Mexicans and Serbs in Southeast Chicago: Racial Group Formation during the Twentieth Century," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94:4 (Winter 2001/02): 406.

cleanliness and it is considered among some of the South Enders that the mandates against their unsanitary modes of living may have been a prime factor in stimulating the exodus."¹⁴⁵ The next day the *Gazette* stated, "The Bohunks are not telling where they are going, and perhaps it is just as well for St. Joseph's conscience."¹⁴⁶ Clearly there were those in the press who believed that the treatment that had been meted out to the Eastern Europeans was unfair.

In the summer of 1909, the Eastern European immigrant community of the South End took it upon itself to attempt to address the issues that were causing so much friction. The Lithuanian-Algirdo Society was created as an organization aimed at "Americanizing" the immigrants. "Among other things, the society is organized 'for the encouragement of reading and writing the English language and teaching the members to read and write the language, and to study the customs and habits of the citizens of America.' Members, who paid \$1 to join and dues of 25¢ per month, were also to study the workings of the United States government. As with so many of these types of organizations, there was also an element of community assistance and entertainment."¹⁴⁷ It is unclear how successful this endeavor was; the press does not appear to have run any more stories about it.

The need that the Lithuanian-Algirdo Society was designed to meet apparently continued. In October 1912, the Y.M.C.A. established a school in the Southend designed to "make citizens of the aliens." R.E. Squires, the General Secretary of the local Y.M.C.A. described the endeavor, "The coming Americans are the so called foreigners who work at the packing houses... Their chief ambition is to learn the speaking, reading, and writing of our language, and this we try to teach them. Our reading course contains books specially designed for this class of people by Dr. Peter Roberts, an expert on immigration work. The books are largely confined to subjects of civil government, to give the students knowledge of our institutions."¹⁴⁸ The St. Joseph Y.M.C.A. was not the only one in the nation to undertake a school of this nature. In the early 1920s the South Chicago Y.M.C.A. created a Christian citizenship program that was designed to teach Eastern European immigrants "American ideals and appropriate standards of living."¹⁴⁹

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¹⁴⁵ "Bohunks Leave: Reason Unknown," *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 4, 1909, pg. 4.

¹⁴⁶ Untitled, *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 5, 1909, pg. 6.

¹⁴⁷ "Bohunks Form a Club to Get Americanized," *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 22, 1909, pg. 2.

¹⁴⁸ "Helps 'Bohunks,'" *St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 5, 1912, pg. 6.

¹⁴⁹ Peter T. Alter, "Mexicans and Serbs in Southeast Chicago: Racial Group Formation during the Twentieth Century," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94:4 (Winter 2001/02): 406.

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Weddings in the Eastern European Jewish Immigrant Community, c. 1890- c. 1950

The ceremonies of ordinary life – birthday celebrations, funerals, holidays, and weddings – tell us a great deal about a community. In those ceremonies we can find clues as to what things are held holy, what the meaning of family is, what role food and music play in life, and how a distinct community is similar to and different from the larger society in which it exists. Weddings provide a useful window into the life of the Jewish community in St. Joseph, Missouri from about 1890 to about 1950.

It is important to understand that the local Jewish immigrant¹⁵⁰ community was also a part of the national immigrant community. The patterns one finds in St. Joseph are reflective of those that have been identified nationally.

General Themes

This analysis is based on a sample of thirty-two weddings ranging in date from 1894 to 1949 that were chosen at random; the only requirement were that at least one of the couple was part of the St. Joseph Jewish immigrant community.¹⁵¹ Of the weddings under consideration here, none were mixed marriages – that is, both of the participants were Jewish.¹⁵² This is reflective of the national pattern where during the first half of the twentieth century mixed marriages were very rare.¹⁵³

One of the most striking features of the weddings under consideration here is the tendency to hold the ceremony in a secular venue rather than in a sacred space. This may well be support for a trend toward Yiddish secularism among Eastern European Jewish immigrants identified by Laura Levitt.¹⁵⁴ Of the thirty-two Jewish weddings examined only 8 (25%) took place in a temple or synagogue. This compares to 22 (69%) church weddings found in the non-

¹⁵⁰ For the purposes of this study the term “immigrant community” refers to those who have immigrated to the United States from Eastern Europe and their children, whether those children were born in the home country or in the United States.

¹⁵¹ See the Appendix for the list of the weddings in the sample and further detail.

¹⁵² Mixed marriages were rare among the St. Joseph Jewish community, but they did happen. An example is the marriage of David Berenberg and Etta L. Lane on November 2, 1893. Berenberg was an immigrant from Russia, but Etta was a non-Jew from Kansas. This was unusual enough that the *St. Joseph News Press* made a point of it: “The groom is a Hebrew while the bride is of gentile parentage.” The newspaper then reported that Etta had converted to her husband’s faith [it is worth noting, however, that she is buried in a non-Jewish cemetery while David is buried in one of the Jewish cemeteries in the city].

¹⁵³ Allan Mazur, “How Distinct are American Jews?” *Contemporary Jewry* (July 2016): 232.

¹⁵⁴ Laura Levitt, “Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism.” *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 808. Levitt quotes a 1959 essay by Jewish commentator Herbert Parzen, “Jewish secularism originated in Eastern Europe and was imported to this country as part of the social baggage of Eastern European immigrants.”

Jewish comparative group.¹⁵⁵ Popular venues for the Jewish weddings included the Hotel Robidoux and Prinz's Dance Academy, as well as at the home of the bride's parents. Of the non-Jewish weddings examined, those that did not occur in a church setting invariably happened at a family home.

Other than the distinct difference in venue, the Jewish and non-Jewish weddings were very similar. The music used at the ceremonies tended to be much the same between the two groups and was remarkably stable over the period examined. The brides' clothing did not differ markedly nor did the type of receptions or honeymoon trips. This similarity would seem to be indicative of the assimilation of the Jewish immigrant community into the society of the United States as a whole.¹⁵⁶ Wedding traditions from the home country appear to have been largely abandoned.

The Couples and their Families

An examination of the families involved in the weddings illustrate two characteristics of the Jewish community in St. Joseph: 1) its homogeneity; 2) its cosmopolitanism. At first blush those would seem to be contradictory, but they are not. The couples and their families tended to be very similar. The majority of the couples, where the information is available, were both born in the United States to parents who had immigrated in the first quarter of the 20th century. The families were not only both Jewish, but also both Eastern European in origin. In St. Joseph there was a distinct division between Jews of German origin and those from Eastern Europe. There was apparently very little intermarriage between the groups.

While, not surprisingly, the majority of couples were both living in St. Joseph at the time of the wedding, there is a significant number where one of them (generally the groom) lived somewhere else. One of the characteristics of the St. Joseph Jewish community was its extensive ties to communities in other cities. This cosmopolitan connectivity can likely be traced to the immigration patterns of the families as they came to the United States. St. Joseph was never the first place where a family landed when coming from Europe and frequently it took several years for them to make their way to St. Joseph. In that period, the families would have created bonds of both friendship and marriage that extended beyond St. Joseph. Thirteen of the thirty-two couples had one member from outside of St. Joseph. Of those, seven were from Kansas City. Two were from Des Moines, Iowa;¹⁵⁷ two were from Brooklyn, and one from Texas.

¹⁵⁵ Thirty non-Jewish weddings, close in date to the Jewish weddings studied, were chosen at random to serve as a comparison.

¹⁵⁶ Allan Mazur, "How Distinct are American Jews?" *Contemporary Jewry* (July 2016): 226-27.

¹⁵⁷ In 2019, the Jewish community in Iowa was vanishingly small, approximately 5,450 – less than 1% of the state's population. Jackson Richman, "Despite Their Small Numbers, Iowan Jews Play Outsize Role in State's Prized Presidential Caucus," *Jewish News Syndicate*, Aug. 22, 2019.

The Venue

The most striking difference between Jewish and non-Jewish weddings was the choice of venue. Overwhelmingly, non-Jewish brides chose to be married in a church; by nearly the same proportion, overwhelmingly Jewish brides chose non-sacred spaces for their weddings. This is a fascinating difference between the Jewish and non-Jewish brides. Levitt, as indicated above, has identified a strong trend toward secularism among the Eastern European Jewish immigrant community in the United States. It would be interesting to compare this group in St. Joseph with the ethnically German Jewish community in the city.

The most popular of the non-sacred spaces for the ceremonies was the Hotel Robidoux. As soon as it opened its doors in 1909, this nine-story hotel was considered the most luxurious in the city.¹⁵⁸ Nearly one-third (10) of the weddings examined here were held at the Hotel Robidoux. Of those, seven were in the Crystal Room¹⁵⁹ and three in the Blue Room (the Crystal Room was the larger of the two). The Hotel Robidoux was popular with Jewish brides in the 1930s and 1940s. The first ceremony under consideration in this study held here was the wedding of Lilian Rosenthal and Joseph Optican at 5:00 p.m. on December 23, 1928. This was a relatively elaborate affair uniting two quite well-to-do families. The Rosenthals owned the Stevens Hat Company and Joseph was a diamond salesman from New York.¹⁶⁰ All of the weddings held in the Hotel used flowers and candles to create an altar-like effect. At the Rosenthal/Optican wedding, "The ceremony will be performed in a bower of greenery, in front of the stage, which will be banked with smilax and white roses, and flanked with white candelabra and tall white baskets of poinsettia."¹⁶¹ All of the weddings held at the Hotel Robidoux were officiated by one of the local Rabbis.

Before the Hotel Robidoux became the fashionable place to wed, two ceremonies were held at the Prinz Dance Academy.¹⁶² On June 15, 1915 at 6:30 in the evening Mary Kalis and Joseph M. Haskell held their ceremony there. Unfortunately, we have nearly no information about the ceremony.¹⁶³ We know a bit more about the June 1925 wedding of Hannah Eisberg and

¹⁵⁸ Unfortunately, the building was allowed to deteriorate and by the 1970s was in serious need of electrical and plumbing upgrades; the owners decided that the needed renovations were cost prohibitive and as the city was in the middle of its disastrous urban renewal program, there was little opposition when the decision to implode the structure was made in 1976. Today the US Bank Building occupies the site.

¹⁵⁹ The Crystal Room, so-called because of its large crystal chandeliers, was 2,952 square feet. "Hotel Room Steel Here," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 22, 1956, pg. 4.

¹⁶⁰ In 1929, Joe opened a jewelry store in the 700 block of Felix Street. Over the next 50 years the business grew and moved to four different locations. It was firmly a family business; two of Joe's brothers-in-law, Max Kaufman and Barney Burnett joined the business. Joe ran the business until his death in 1958 and at that time Lilian took over as president until her death in 1970, when their only child Dick took the reigns. The business closed in 1991. Terry Raffensperger, "Family Businesses Fade Away in Changing Economic Times: Optican's Jewelry is Latest in Citywide Trend of Closings," *St. Joseph News Press*, April 21, 1991, pg. 1C.

¹⁶¹ "Rosenthal-Optican," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Dec. 23, 1928, pg. 20.

¹⁶² This was a dancing school run by Edward Prinz, perhaps best known as the father of the renowned dancer LeRoy Prinz. The Academy was located at 10th and Robidoux and unfortunately was demolished in 1983.

¹⁶³ "Wedding Invitations," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 26, 1915, pg. 6.

Maurice Cohn held there. It must have been a large venue because the Cohns hosted 300 for dinner following their ceremony.¹⁶⁴

In 1902 Rebecca Burnett and David Fine held their wedding at the Odd Fellows Auditorium in front of 200 guests. Following the ceremony there was dinner and dancing in the basement. The *News Press* reported that “dancing was enjoyed in the hall until a late hour.”¹⁶⁵

Several of the weddings were held at family homes, in this choice, Jewish brides were very similar to their non-Jewish counterparts.

The Music

There is little real variation in the music played at the weddings under consideration here; the song choices remained remarkably stable across the decades and there is no real difference between the song selections of the Jewish brides and the non-Jewish brides.

Not surprisingly, “The Wedding March” from *Lohengrin* by Richard Wagner was the overwhelming choice of brides as the processional and many chose Mendelssohn’s Wedding March as the recessional.

Among the popular choices of songs to be performed during the service was “I Love You Truly.”¹⁶⁶ This choice first appears in our study at the wedding of Edythe Rosenfield and Samuel Marx Jr. on Oct. 14, 1915 and was performed at at least eleven of the weddings in the sample and remained popular throughout this period, last being performed at the February 1947 wedding of Beverly Burnstein and Sidney Cohen. “Because” by D’Hardelot¹⁶⁷ was another popular choice; with seven brides having it performed at their ceremony, beginning with the December 1928 union of Lillian Rosenthal and Joseph Optican and its last performance in this sample was at the Burnstein-Cohen wedding in 1947. Guests at four of the weddings heard “To a Wild Rose” the popular song by Edward MacDowell. “Beloved, It is Morn” by Florence Aylward, Victor Herbert’s “Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life” and “At Dawning” by Nelle Richmond Eberhart were chosen by two of the brides.

The ceremony that was perhaps the most typical in its music selection was the wedding of Ann Aronson and Dr. Theodore Saferstein held at 5:00 p.m. on June 23, 1935 in the Blue Room at the Hotel Robidoux. “Preceding the ceremony, Sherman Kalis will play two violin selections, ‘At Dawning’ and ‘I Love You Truly.’ He will be accompanied at the piano by Miss Adele Pitluck, who will play the wedding march from ‘Lohengrin’ and Mendelssohn’s march. She will also play ‘To a Wild Rose’ (MacDowell) during the ceremony.”¹⁶⁸

Performers:

Not surprisingly, most of the individuals who performed at these weddings were friends of the families of the couples or members of the community. These performers were generally

¹⁶⁴“Eisberg-Cohn,” *St. Joseph News Press*, June 6, 1925, pg. 6.

¹⁶⁵ “Prominent Jewish Couple Wed Yesterday,” *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 18, 1902, pg. 4.

¹⁶⁶ Written by Carrie Jacobs-Bond in 1901. It immediately became a popular choice for weddings.

¹⁶⁷ This song was written in French by d’Hardelot and English lyrics by Edward Teschemacher were published in 1902.

¹⁶⁸ “Marriage at Hotel,” *St. Joseph News Press*, June 23, 1935, pg. 19.

amateurs. However, there were a few who were featured in multiple weddings, and at least one – Sherman Pitluck – who went on to become a world-renowned violinist and teacher.

- Dora Abramson: (born in 1897). Dora Abramson was the daughter of Jacob I. and Frieda S. Abramson. Jacob and Frieda were Polish immigrants and owned a furniture store. She graduated from Central High School in 1913 with honors.¹⁶⁹ She studied music with Mrs. L.O. Weakley. In 1920 Dora was living with her family at 408 S. 12th Street. The first wedding in the sample where she performed was the October 14, 1915 wedding of Edythe Rosenfield and Samuel Marx Jr. that took place at the bride's parents' home at 411 N. 16th Street. She sang "Beloved, It is Morn" at Ruby Pitluck and Daniel Shanberg's ceremony on January 4, 1920 at the Shaare Sholem Synagogue. Dora was a popular performer at weddings in the Jewish community between 1915 and 1920. Her performing career appears to have come to an end with her own marriage to Sam L. Robinson on June 8, 1921.¹⁷⁰
- Feltenstein's Orchestra – popular in the city in the period around 1920. They were the featured act various parties and were the regular band at the Frank Mahney dance hall. The leader of the group was the violinist Ike Feltenstein¹⁷¹.
- Sherman Pitluck (Aug. 15, 1912- July 15, 1990). Sherman Pitluck was perhaps the most accomplished of the wedding musicians. He was an important figure in the St. Joseph music scene during his teens and early 20s. Sherman was the son of Max and Reba Pitluck, both Russian/Polish immigrants. He was a graduate of Central High School and the St. Joseph Junior College before leaving St. Joseph to study music in Paris at the L'Ecole Normale de Muisique and then to New York where he lived and worked for many years. He then taught at the Indiana University School of Music and was president of Paragon Programs Inc. A music management service.¹⁷² His book, *The Art of Tone Production for Stringed Instruments* was published in 1976.¹⁷³
- Phyllis Pitluck: (Sept. 6, 1917 – Oct. 21, 2004) Phyllis was a talented pianist who frequently accompanied her brother Sherman. She was recognized as a major talent in her own right. In October 1932, she performed in a series of recitals in the city. The *St. Joseph Gazette* wrote of her at that time, "Miss Pitluck is a talented young pianist, being still in her early teens, who shows great promise. Frank Manheimer, London pianist, who conducted a master class in St. Joseph last spring gave unstinting praise of Miss Pitluck's work and gave her much encouragement to continue her study of the piano. He said that she displayed greater talent, for her age, than any pupil he had ever had in a master class."¹⁷⁴ In 1937, when she graduated from St. Joseph Junior College, she was awarded a \$50 scholarship by the St. Joseph branch of the American Association of University Women.¹⁷⁵ Following her graduation from Junior College she moved to

¹⁶⁹ "Commencement To Be Tonight," *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 29, 1913, pg. 3.

¹⁷⁰ "Abramson-Robinson," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 8, 1921, pg. 6.

¹⁷¹ "Finito club Loses Another One of its Members," *St. Joseph News-Press*, March 13, 1950, pg. 4.

¹⁷² "Sherman Pitluck," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 12, 1990, pg. 15.

¹⁷³ "Pitluck Book," *St. Joseph News Press*, March 27, 1976, pg. 42.

¹⁷⁴ "Miss Nan E. Capp Plans Series of Winter Recitals," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 9, 1932, pg. 11.

¹⁷⁵ "Committee Announces Award," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 18, 1937, pg. 6.

Kansas City with her parents where she taught piano. She gave up her music career when she married Melvin Rolsky (who died in 1991). She then married Harry Kuluva and she helped him run Kuluva's Furniture Company.¹⁷⁶



Image from the St. Joseph News Press, May 18, 1937, pg. 6

- Florence Eisberg: (Aug. 27, 1909 – April 29, 1970-). Florence Eisberg was the daughter of Aaron and Mollie, both Russian immigrants, the owners of a grocery store. Florence was born in St. Joseph. She begins performing at weddings quite young, the first in the sample is that of her elder sister Hannah to Maurice Cohn in June 1925 at Prinz's Dancing Academy. In February 1929 she performed a gypsy dance at a recital for

¹⁷⁶ "Phyllis M. Kuluva," *The Kansas City Star*, Oct. 23, 2004, pg. 19.

advanced music students accompanied by Phyllis Pitluck.¹⁷⁷ In May 1931, she was the pianist accompanying Sherman Pitluck at Rose Kaplan and Arthur Croner's wedding. She married Barney Friedson of Kansas City on January 15, 1933 at the Hotel Robidoux.¹⁷⁸

The Officials

One thing that all of the weddings in the sample have in common is that they were presided over by a Rabbi.

- Isaac Schwab: (born in 1841). Rabbi Schwab was born in Bavaria and was elected Rabbi of Temple Adath Joseph on March 23, 1879.¹⁷⁹ He was the Rabbi at the Temple for twenty-seven years before he was not re-elected to his post in 1906.¹⁸⁰ Following his ouster from Adath Joseph, he sold most of his property in St. Joseph and moved to Chicago to take up a career in religious journalism.¹⁸¹

In the 1900 census he was living with his wife Fannie and four of their five children at 612 Jules St. At that he was naturalized. He and Fannie, from Prussia, married in 1869, the same year they immigrated to the United States. The births of their children trace an interesting pattern of movement once they came to the United States. Their oldest daughter, Racheal, was born in Oregon in 1870. Five years later David was born in Indiana. In 1877 the family was in New York when Rosey was born, and Esther was born in 1880 in St. Joseph.

¹⁷⁷ "Gives Second in Series of Capp Recitals," *St. Joseph Gazette*, February 10, 1929, pg. 19.

¹⁷⁸ "Eisberg-Friedson," *St. Joseph Gazette*, January 12, 1933, pg. 4.

¹⁷⁹ "Adath Joseph to Observe 2 Important Anniversaries," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 20, 1950, pg. 7.

¹⁸⁰ It was said that the younger members of the congregation favored a more youthful rabbi. "Rabbi Isaac Schwab Fails of Re-election," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 26, 1906, pg. 1.

¹⁸¹ "Dr. Isaac Schwab on His Deathbed?" *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan 29, 1907, pg. 6.



Image from St. Joseph News Press, Feb. 26, 1906, pg. 1

- M.L. Broude: (1866- May 3, 1929) Rabbi at Shaare Sholem. He was born in Poland and came to the United States in 1913; initially living in Chicago for two years before coming to St. Joseph in 1915. He lived at 731 S. 9th St. at the time of his death. His obituary said of him, “Rabbi Broude was an intellectual leader of his race, and was held in high esteem by those who knew him. As a student of the Talmud it was said he had few equals in St. Joseph. He also was a deep student of history and literature of the Hebrew people and was accustomed to delight his intimates with his wide knowledge.”¹⁸² He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

¹⁸² “Rabbi Broude Dead,” *St. Joseph News Press*, May 3, 1929, pg. 7.



Image from the St. Joseph News Press, May 3, 1929, pg. 7.

- Rabbi Myron Meyer: (Dec. 29, 1896- Nov. 26, 1974) Rabbi at Temple Adath Joseph. He was born in Dallas, Texas. He graduated from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1916 and from the University of Cincinnati in 1918 and earned the degree of Rabbi from Hebrew Union College in 1921. and moved to St. Joseph in 1927 to take up his position at Temple Adath Joseph where he served until his retirement in 1968. Rabbi Meyer was a prominent voice in St. Joseph's religious, educational, and cultural life. He had been a director of the St. Joseph symphony society. He was professor emeritus at Missouri Western State College at the time of his death, teaching philosophy and comparative religion.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ "Death Takes Rabbi Myron M. Meyer," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Nov. 27, 1974, pg. 1.

- Iser Levin: (1888- Sept. 12, 1945) Rabbi of Shaare Sholem Synagogue. Rabbi Levin, his wife Vila, and his daughters Ruth¹⁸⁴ and Esther¹⁸⁵ were born in Lithuania. They came to the United States in 1929. In 1930 the family were renting a house on S. 9th St. In 1935 he was the president of the local Mizrachi organization¹⁸⁶ At the time of his death he was living at 802 S. 11th St. He died of heart failure and cancer of the rectum and is buried at Shaare Sholem.

Conclusion

The examination of the random sample of weddings among the Eastern European Jewish community of St. Joseph tells us a fair amount about the community and what they valued. The weddings were often secular in nature, most not being held in a sacred space. The music and decorations chosen for the ceremonies were generally not particularly Jewish in character and did not differ substantially from those used in non-Jewish weddings. The same can be said for what the brides wore and the honeymoon trips taken by the couples. The nature of these ceremonies speaks to the importance of assimilation by this community; these weddings were quintessentially “American.”

¹⁸⁴ Ruth graduated from Central High School in St. Joseph in 1935. She attended Herzl College in Chicago and taught Hebrew school in Chicago. In 1938 she married Dr. Milton A. Saffir of Chicago. “Untitled” *St. Joseph News Press*, March 30, 1936, pg. 6; “Miss Ruth Levin engaged to Marry Milton A. Saffir,” *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 27, 1938, pg. 18.

¹⁸⁵ In December 1945, Esther married Joseph Goldman, the son of Rabbi D. Goldman of Chicago at Shaare Sholem Synagogue. She planned to continue her education at the University of Chicago, where she was pursuing a degree in liberal arts. Goldman intended to be ordained as a rabbi. “Miss Levin Weds Today,” *St. Joseph News Press*, Dec. 30, 1945, pg. 17.

¹⁸⁶ A religious Zionist organization

Sample of Weddings of the Eastern European Jewish Community

1894: Birdie (Bertha) Stern and Julius Rosenblatt

Bride	
Dates	March 8, 1871- Jan.4, 1942
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	
Occupation	
	Moved to KC after Julius' death
	Buried at Adath Joseph

Groom	
Dates	May 24, 1862-Nov. 2, 1921
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	
Occupation	Banker at First National Bank of Buchanan County
	Buried at Adath Joseph

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Prussia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Retail clothing
Address	410 N. 6 th St.
Parents	Simon Stern ¹⁸⁷ Henrietta Miller Stern (May 1840-). Born in MO, parents in Germany. In 1900 census has had 8 children, 6 are living.

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Bavaria
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Dry Goods Merchant
Address	
Parents	Herman Rosenblatt (1830-): In the 1870 census he was born in Bayern Bavaria. He was a Dry Goods merchant – personal estate value at \$2,000, real estate value \$7,000 Emma Rosenblatt (1843) Born in England.

¹⁸⁷ Simon Stern (Oct. 8, 1837- Aug. 9, 1913): In the 1880 census he lives on N. 6th Street with wife and children. He is in retail clothing. In the 1910 census he is still on N. 6th, but is a widower. He was a superintendent for city clarifiers(?). Died as a result of gangrene of the right foot. At the time of his death lives at 410 N. 6th St.. Buried at Adath Joseph

Wedding ¹⁸⁸	Oct. 24, 1894
Location	The Temple, Adath Joseph
Officiant	Rabbi Schwab ¹⁸⁹
Attendants	Isidor Schwarz (master of ceremonies) Florence Stern (maid of honor, bride's sister) Nuna Landman, Babbette Bearman, Lollie Siegel, Emma Rosenblatt, Nora Westheimer, Eva Schloss (from Denver); Elsie Block, Will Ehrlich, S. Barth (from Atchison), I Rothschild (from Leavenworth); H. Rosenblatt, B. Binswanger, Jake Cohen, Arhus Stern, Max Stern (Minneapolis); Simon Schloss (Denver)
Food	"elegant and sumptuous banquet"
Music	
Reception Venue	The Pacific Hotel
Honeymoon	"The young couple left on a late train last night for Chicago and New York to spend the honeymoon"
At Home Address	"Will be at home after Nov. 15, at the Pacific

1902: Rebecca Burnett and David Fine

Bride	
Dates	Dec. 13, 1881- Sept. 19, 1955
Where born	Balstaock, Poland
Education	
Occupation	housewife
	Buried at Shaare Shalome

Groom	
Dates	(187-March 19, 1944)
Where born	Russia
Education	6 th grade
Occupation	Wholesale Mercantile Co. Grocer
	In the 1940 census he is living at 729 S. 10 th St. with wife, daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter, and maid.
	Buried at Shaare Shalome

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland
How long in US	Immigrated in 1900
Occupation(s)	
Address	618 S. 6 th St.

¹⁸⁸ "Rosenblatt-Stern," *St. Joseph Gazette Herald*, Oct. 25, 1894, pg. 5.

¹⁸⁹ Isaac Schwab. (1841-) Born in Bavaria. He was elected Rabbi on March 23, 1879. He retired in 1906. "Adath Joseph to Observe 2 Important Anniversaries," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 20, 1950, pg. 7.

Parents	Morris Burnett
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Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	Immigrated in 1900
Occupation(s)	
Address	
Parents	Louis Fine, born in Russia Mother, born in Russia

Wedding ¹⁹⁰	7:15 p.m. Aug. 17, 1902
Location	Odd Fellows Auditorium
Officiant	Rabbi Couter
Attendants	Will Beniwitz, Joseph Beniwitz, Morris Burnett; Mattie Lieberman, Sally Burnett, Sarah Burnett
Food	"dinner was served in the basement of the auditorium"
Music	dancing
Guests	"in the presence of fully two hundred Jewish people"
Reception	"dancing was enjoyed in the hall until a late hour."
Honeymoon	"will leave this evening on a wedding tour and will visit in Colorado."
At Home Address	1202 Grand

1915: Mary Kalis and Joseph M. Haskell

Bride	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	
	From Des Moines

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	

¹⁹⁰ "Prominent Jewish Couple Wed Yesterday," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 18, 1902, pg. 4.

Address	
Parents	Harris Kalis (April 26, 1853- April 3, 1935) Ida Kalis (Dec. 1865- May 3, 1944)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Retail merchant
Address	
Parents	

Wedding ¹⁹¹	June 15 at 6:30
Location	Prinz's dance academy
Officiant	
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Clothing	
At Home Address	In 1928 they are living in NYC ¹⁹²

1915: Edythe Rosenfield and Samuel Marx Jr.

Bride	
Dates	1895
Where born	Pennsylvania
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	7/2/1893-
Where born	Denver, Colorado
Education	
Occupation	Shipping clerk

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia (Morris)/ Pennsylvania (Sarah)
How long in US	1880 (Morris)
Occupation(s)	Retail Jewelry
Address	411 N. 16 th St.
Parents	Morris Rosenfield Sarah Rosenfield

¹⁹¹ "Wedding Invitations," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 26, 1915, pg. 6.

¹⁹² Untitled, *St. Joseph News Press*, March 23, 1928, pg. 6.

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	
Parents	

Wedding¹⁹³	
Location	Bride's parents' home, 411 N. 16 th St.
Officiant	Rabbi M. Bronde
Attendants	Rose Rosenfield (sister of bride), Jack Marx (brother of groom)
Food	
Music	"Mrs. J. Rosenfield, aunt of the bride, played the Lohengrin wedding march and before the service Miss Dora Abramson sang 'I Love You Truly.'"
Clothing	
Honeymoon	Kansas City, Excelsior Springs, and Des Moines
At Home Address	411 N. 16 th St.

1917: Jeanette Borofsky and Ben Aronson

Bride	Sister of Bertha C Borofsky Holtzer
Dates	Jan. 28, 1889- July 29, 1982
Where born	Russia, immigrated in 1892
Education	
Occupation	1911 CD – living at 626 S. 10 th and listed as a clerk
	Died in Cedar Rapids, IA buried at Kehilath Israel Blue Ridge Cemetery in Independence.

Groom	
Dates	June 10, 1885- May 10, 1954
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	grocer
	Died in KC

¹⁹³ "Rosenfield-Marx," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 14, 1915, pg. 6.

Bride's Family	It is interesting that in the wedding announcement they do not mention her parents.
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	1891 (father) 1892 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Meat market, Rabbi
Address	626 S. 10 th St. (still there, very cool) (rent)
Parents	Hyman David Borofsky (Sept. 15, 1865-July 11, 1930) – in the 1910 census he is a rabbi Hannah Leah Schupach.(Feb. 5, 1860-Dec. 5, 1920) – Buried at Shaare Sholem

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Grocer
Address	Kansas City
Parents	Herman Aronson – born in Russia Minnie Sandolsky – born in Russia

Wedding¹⁹⁴	
Location	Home of bride, 626 S. 10 th St.
Officiant	
Attendants	Ida Borofsky (maid of honor), Bertha Borofsky, Regina Pitluck
Food	
Music	
Clothing	“The bride, dressed in white net over taffeta, carried a bouquet of white roses and lilies of the valley
At Home Address	Moving to KC

¹⁹⁴ Untitled, *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 14, 1917, pg. 5.

1918: Celia Bornstein and Sam H. Kalis

Bride	
Dates	Nov. 29, 1896 – Dec. 8, 1993
Where born	Illinois
Education	Affiliated with Phi Laned sorority
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	March 26, 1893 – Nov. 28, 1983
Where born	Missouri
Education	Affiliated with Aleph Aleph fraternity
Occupation	Lt., aviation mechanics. In 1920 he is an attorney
	From St. Paul Minn

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia -- children are born in Illinois, Massachusetts, & MO
How long in US	1885
Occupation(s)	Skirt designer, designer of Ladies clothes
Address	723 S. 15 th (1910), 723 S. 10 th
Parents	Louis Bornstein Lena

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland
How long in US	1889
Occupation(s)	Retail merchant
Address	2640 Mitchell (1910) 529 N. 13 th St. (1930)
Parents	Harris Kalis ¹⁹⁵ Ida Kalis

Wedding ¹⁹⁶	6:00 p.m. April 30, 1918
Location	Brides parents' home 723 S. 10 th St.
Officiant	Rabbi Broudy ¹⁹⁷
Attendants	
Food	"After the wedding a supper was served to sixty guests."

¹⁹⁵ One of the founders of the Shaare Sholem congregation. "I.H. Kalis to be Honored at Testimonial Dinner," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 24, 1954, pg. 7.

¹⁹⁶ "Bornstein-Kalis Wedding," *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 1, 1918, pg. 5.

¹⁹⁷ Rabbi at Shaare Sholem synagogue

Music	"Mrs. Mary sang, "Beloved, It is Morn," by Allward preceding the ceremony, and Miss Jeanette Kalis played the wedding march from 'Lohengrin.'
Clothes	"The bride wore a gown of white georgette crepe with tulle veil caught with lilies of the valley. She carried a shower bouquet of bride's roses and white sweet peas.
Honeymoon	"For travelling she wore a suit of blue Poiret twill with black hat trimmed in blue plumes." "En route to St. Paul, where Lieut. Kalis is stationed in the aviation mechanics training school, they will stop in Council Bluffs and Omaha"
At Home Address	They went to St. Paul, but eventually ended up in KC where they are buried. In 1920 they are in St. Joseph living at 311 ½ N. 16 th St. In 1928, they are living in NY.

1920: Ruby Pitluck and Daniel Shanberg

Bride	
Dates	March 1897- Dec. 7, 1934
Where born	Russia, immigrated in 1900
Education	
Occupation	Bookkeeper before her marriage
	Died of pneumonia and buried at Shaare Shalom
	At the time of her death living at 614 S. 14th

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	724 S. 8 th St
	Ruby was living with her uncle and aunt, Louis and Dorah Cohn

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	

Wedding¹⁹⁸	5:00 p.m. Jan. 4, 1920
Location	Shaare Sholem Synagogue
Officiant	Rabbi Broude
Attendants	Mrs. I.L. Pitluck (matron of honor), Dorothy Shanberg (Chicago), Lillian Droher, I.L. Pitluck (best man), William Stone, Dr. I.H. Droher
Food	"After the ceremony a dinner will be served at the home of the bride's brother, Mr. Simon Pitluck, 623 S. 10 th St."
Music	"Miss Dora Abramson will sing 'Beloved, It is Morn,' preceding the service. Feltenstein's orchestra will play
Honeymoon	"Mr. Shanberg and his bride will leave tonight for an eastern trip..."
At Home Address	733 S. 10th

1920: Sarah Boukans and Ralph I Robinson

Bride	
Dates	1895-
Where born	France, immigrated in 1900
Education	
Occupation	In 1920 she is a salesperson in general merchandise retail (her father's store)

Groom	
Dates	Jan 25, 1889-
Where born	Russia
Education	
Occupation	He and Sarah bought a share in her father's business, this brought them into conflict with her brother.
	From Kansas City

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Lithuania/Russia
How long in US	1904 (father) 1900 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Merchant, general merchandise, Boukans Department Store, 1109 N. 3 rd St. In 1922 "Jake D. Boukans is the plaintiff in a suit against Ralph I. Robinson, Sarah Robinson, and Bernard Boukans, father of the plaintiff, in which the younger Boukans is alleging an effort was made to oust him as a partner in the Boukans Department store at 1109 N 3 rd St."
Address	1109 N. 3 rd St.
Parents	Bernard Boukans Anna Sher (Dec. 3, 1861-Feb. 2, 1924). Buried at Shaare Sholem

¹⁹⁸ "Pitluck-Shanberg," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 4, 1920, pg. 21.

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	

Wedding¹⁹⁹	5:00 March 14, 1920
Location	Kansas City, actual venue unknown
Officiant	Rabbi Cohn
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Guests	Only immediate family

1921: Bertha Borofsky and Henry Holtzer

Bride	She is the sister of Jeanette Borofsky Aronson
Dates	May 26, 1898 – March 26, 1991
Where born	Kansas
Education	
Occupation	In 1920 she is a stenographer at a wholesale hat and cap co
	Buried at Mt. Carmel in KC

Groom	
Dates	Feb. 28, 1894- Oc. 21, 1949
Where born	NY
Education	
Occupation	At death, merchant, Ace Mercantile Co
	Buried at Mt. Carmel in KC

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia – all their children born in Kansas
How long in US	1892
Occupation(s)	Rabbi at Shaare Shalom
Address	626 S. 14 th St.
Parents	Hyman D. Borofsky Hannah Leah Schupach

¹⁹⁹ "Boukans-Robinson," *St. Joseph Gazette*, March 14, 1920, pg. 21.

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	Brooklyn, NY
Parents	Adolph Holtzer, d. 1922, buried in Mount Hebron Cemetery Flushing NY

Wedding²⁰⁰	June 1921
Location	Shaare Shalom
Officiant	Rabbi M. Broudy
Attendants	Mrs. I.H. Droher (bride's sister) and Dr. I.H. Droher
Food	"A wedding dinner will be served to immediate relatives after the ceremony at the home of the bride's father."
Music	
Clothes	"The bride will wear a gown of ivory georgette crepe and lace made over ivory satin. Her tulle veil will be caught in a cap effect with a bandeau of orange blossoms. The veil will be caught throughout its length with sprays of the orange blossoms. She will carry a shower bouquet of bride roses and lilies of the valley."

1923: Minnie Goldberg and Isadore Bordman

Bride	
Dates	
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	
	In 1920 she is living with her brother Samuel and her mother on Illinois Ave.

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	Cigar merchant in KC

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland/Russia
How long in US	1884 (father) 1889 (mother)

²⁰⁰ "Borofsky-Holtzer," *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 17, 1921, pg. 8.

Occupation(s)	Clothing merchant (father) Furnishing goods store (mother); Attorney (brother Samuel)
Address	405 Illinois Ave.
Parents	Rebecca Goldberg, Ben Goldberg (July ?? – March 14, 1918) Buried at Shaare Shalom

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	Kansas City
Parents	Mrs. S. Bordman

Wedding ²⁰¹	April 1923
Location	Hotel Baltimore in KC
Officiant	Rabbi M. Cohen
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Guests	Only immediate relatives
At Home Address	Kansas City

1925: Hannah Eisberg and Maurice Cohn

Bride	
Dates	1904-
Where born	Missouri
Education	High school
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	

²⁰¹ "Announces Marriage," *St. Joseph Gazette*, April 19, 1923, pg. 7.

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia, all children born in MO
How long in US	1883 (father) 1885 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Owens a grocery store
Address	733 S. 10th
Parents	Aaron Henry Eisberg (?-March 8, 1939) buried at Bnai Yaakov Mollie Fine

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	Kansas City
	Maurice Cohn

Wedding ²⁰²	June 1925
Location	Prinz's Dancing Academy
Officiant	Rabbi M. Broudy
Attendants	Mrs. Abe Keiner, sister of the bride, Freda Fine, Elsie Fine, Mollye Pitluck, Mollye Segall, Mrs. R.R. Cohn (KC), Abe Keiner, Meyer Segall, Sam Wasserman
Food	"After the ceremony supper will be served to 300 guests."
Music	"Preceding the ceremony, Miss Edith Karpf will sing, "I Love You Truly," and "At Dawning," accompanied by Miss Florence Eisberg, sister of the bride. Miss Eisberg will also play the wedding march. Mr. Ben Alex will play the violin."
Honeymoon	"will go East for a honeymoon trip"
At Home Address	Kansas City

1928: Lillian Rosenthal and Joseph Optican

Bride	
Dates	1901 - 1971
Where born	NY
Education	Finished high school
Occupation	None at the time of the wedding, eventually she became president of the company

²⁰² "Eisberg-Cohn," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 6, 1925, pg. 6.

Groom	
Dates	Sept. 26, 1896- Oct. 27, 1958
Where born	Denver
Education	8 th grade
Occupation	Diamond salesman at the time of the marriage. Became President of Joe Optican Jewelry Co.
Address	New York
	Lived at 1065 Noyes Blvd at time of death
	Buried at Shaare Sholem

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland, children born in NY and MO
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Partner and co-founder Stevens Hat Company
Address	
Parents	Hyman Rosenthal (July 12, 1874 -Oct. 2, 1944)—he was crushed by an elevator at his factory Yetta Liberman (1874- July 30, 1937)
	Her parents lived with them, first at Messanie and then on Noyes

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	
Parents	Alex Opitcan Goldie Schuman

Wedding²⁰³	5:00 Dec. 23, 1928
Location	Crystal Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Myron Meyer
Attendants	Mollie Rosenthal (sister of the bride), Abe Optican (KC)
Food	"After the ceremony a dinner will be served in the Japanese tea room to relatives. A wedding cake will center the T-shaped table, lighted by white candles in three-branched brass candelabra tied with pink tulle."
Music	"Before the ceremony, Miss Rebecca Rose will sing 'Because' (D'Hardelot) and 'Sweet Mystery of Life' (Herbert). The Lohengrin wedding march will be played by Miss Thelma Mednidow as processional and the Mendelssohn march as recessional."

²⁰³ "Rosenthal-Optican," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Dec. 23, 1928, pg. 20.

Decorations	“The ceremony will be performed in a bower of greenery, in front of the stage, which will be banked with smilax and white roses, and flanked with white candelabra and tall white baskets of poinsettia.”
Clothing	“The bride will wear a gown of ivory satin with tight bodice and long sleeves, Frills down the front and back of the waist will be lengthened into the long full skirt. Her veil of tulle and old point lace will be held with orange blossoms and she will carry a shower bouquet of bride’s roses and lilies of the valley”
Reception	“A reception and dance will be given in the crystal room at 9 o’clock to which 250 guests have been invited.”
Honeymoon	“Mr. Opitcan and his bride will go to New York and from there to California by the Southern route. They will return to St. Joseph the latter part of April...” “For traveling, the bride will wear an Augusta Bernard model of black French velvet with deep yoke of Alencon lace and hat of black French velvet, both the hat and dress being trimmed in square buckles of rhinestones. Her black coat is trimmed in dyed fitch.”
At Home Address	1118 Messanie St. (now gone)

1931: Mollie Pitluck and Louis Burnstein

Bride	
Dates	Sept. 17, 1907- May 17, 1989
Where born	MO
Education	Graduated Benton High School, attended University of Missouri
Occupation	Worked as a clerk in her father’s grocery

Groom	
Dates	Nov. 16, 1907 – Jan. 25, 2000
Where born	MO
Education	Graduate of Creighton University
Occupation	
Address	Platte City

Bride’s Family	
Place of Origin	Russia/Poland, children born in MO
How long in US	1900 (father), 1891 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Retail grocer
Address	4715 King Hill Ave.
Parents	Marcus Pitluck (Nov. 14, 1884 – Nov. 30, 1953) Buried at Shaare Sholem Ethel R. Borofsky (1888-Sept. 25, 1953)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia (father), Poland (mother), children born in Russia and MO.
How long in US	1904
Occupation(s)	Owens bakery
Address	817 S. 8 th St.
Parents	Aaron Burnstein (d. March 4, 1939) buried at Shaare Sholem Sarah (April 12, 1868- Feb. 18, 1947)

Wedding²⁰⁴	
Location	Crystal Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin of the Shaare Sholem Synagogue
Attendants	Adele Pitluck (sister of the bride), Mrs. Samuel H. Green (Omaha), Ethel Brady, Florence Deitchman, and Florence Eisberg. Al Burnstein (Platte City), Al Rothstein (KC), Morris Kaufman (Atchison), Raymond Bell (KC), Irvin Joffe.
Food	
Music	"Preceding the ceremony, Miss Helen Kranitz will sing 'I Love You Truly' (Bond) and 'L'Amour Toujours L'Amour' (Friml), and Sherman Pitluck, violinists, accompanied at the piano by his sister, Miss Phyllis, will play 'Meditation,' from 'Thals' (Massenet). They will play the wedding march from 'Lohengrin' from processional, 'To a Wild Rose' (MacDowell) during the ceremony and Mendelssohn's wedding march as recessional."
Decorations	"The canopy under which the ceremony will take place will be flanked on two sides with palms, ferns, and tall white candelabra holding white tapers."
Bride's Clothing	"She will wear a long sleeveless dress of heavy ivory satin trailing the floor in back, with tight bodice and a slantwise peplum effect on the full circular skirt. Her tulle veil, trimmed with Chantilly lace, will be arranged in cap effect, the cap held in place with orange blossoms. She will wear long white kid gloves and white faille slippers and will carry a shower bouquet of white Killarney roses, sweet peas and buddleia tied with white lace and silver ribbon."
Honeymoon	St. Louis and Chicago
At Home Address	Platte City

²⁰⁴ "Pitluck-Burnstein Nuptials," St. Joseph News Press, Jan. 31, 1931, pg. 6.

1931: Rose Kaplan and Arthur Croner

Bride	
Dates	1909-
Where born	New York
Education	Finished High School
Occupation	Bookkeeper in a grocery store

Groom	
Dates	Sept. 5, 1907- May 7, 1988
Where born	MO
Education	4 years of college
Occupation	Proprietor of a Retail drug company
	Buried at Shaare Sholem

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland (on his death certificate Bernard's place of birth is Kouna, Russia), children born in New York
How long in US	1891 (father), 1896 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Proprietor of clothing store
Address	720 S. 10 th St.
Parents	Barned Kaplan (Sept, 10, 1874- Sept. 24, 1937) Anna Davis Kaplan (Sept 1, 1887- March 14, 1948)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Grocer and tire merchant
Address	1516 S. 12 th St.
Parents	Abe Croner (May 10, 1881 – Jan. 21, 1961) Anna Burst (July 27, 1882- July 1, 1940) Lottie Rositsky (Rose) (Dec. 23, 1885- March 6, 1959)[this may be his 2 nd wife]

Wedding ²⁰⁵	6:00 p.m. May 31, 1931
Location	Temple Ahavath Emmunoh
Officiant	Rabbi Myron M. Meyer
Attendants	Dorothy Fishman,, Mildred Necemias, Gladys Goldberg, Sadie Croner, Alice Kern; Herman Kaplan (brother of bride), Sam Croner, Nate Kaplan, Ruebern Kern, and Jack Zurovsky
Food	
Music	“Preceding the ceremony Charles Peters will sing ‘I Love You Truly’ (Bond) and ‘Calm as the Night’ (Bohm) with accompaniments by Miss Florence Eisberg, piano, and Sherman

²⁰⁵ “Kaplan-Croner,” *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 31, 1931, pg. 14.

	Pitluck, violin. The wedding march from 'Lohengrin' will be processional and Mendlesohn's wedding march will be recessional. 'A Dream' (Lynn) will be played during the ceremony."
Decorations	"The altar will be banked with palms and ferns, and will have a lighted candelabrum at each side. The canopy will be performed under a canopy of lattice work covered with smilax and roses."
Bride's Clothing	"will wear a Patou model eggshell of Chantilly lace made Gecian style. Her veil of eggshell tile has a Juliette cap of pearls. She will carry a shower bouquet of Johanna Hill roses and lilies of the valley"
Reception	At home of the bride
Honeymoon	"A short wedding trip"
At Home Address	720 S. 10 th St.
Divorce	Divorced in St. Joseph in November 1946. Custody of one child to mother in school months and father during vacation.

1933: Helen Marder and Abe Nemzoff

Bride	
Dates	1910 – Dec. 2, 1990
Where born	Kansas City
Education	2 years of college
Occupation	teacher
	Buried at Adath Joseph

Groom	Birth name is Avron
Dates	April 20, 1903 – June 21, 1964
Where born	Kiev, Russia
Education	College and law school
Occupation	Attorney, Contractor at time of death
	Buried at Adath Joseph
	At death lived at 2750 Fairleigh Terr.

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	Kansas City
Parents	Sarah Marder

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	1904
Occupation(s)	Retail grocer
Address	1212 N. 26 th St.

Parents	Moses Nemzoff (April 19, 1876- June 15, 1958) Esther Kaufman (1876- Dec. 28, 1953) buried at Shaare Shalom
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Wedding²⁰⁶	
Location	Home of the bride's mother
Officiant	
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Home	In 1938, 203 N. Noyes Blvd.

1935: Libbie Gordon and Herman Kaplan

Bride	
Dates	1910-2006
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	After the marriage she helped Herman with the clothing store

Groom	
Dates	June 21, 1901- Feb. 10, 1969
Where born	New York
Education	
Occupation	Clothing merchant (at time of death)

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	1910 (Jacob) 1913 (Jennie)
Occupation(s)	grocer
Address	2327 St. Joseph Ave
Parents	Jacob Gordon Jennie Gordon

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Kouna, Russia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	720 S. 10th
Parents	Bernard Kaplan

²⁰⁶ "Marder-Nemzoff," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Dec. 9, 1933, pg. 4.

Wedding	Jan. 27, 1935
Location	2327 St. Joseph Ave.
Officiant	Iser Levin
Attendants	
Food	Dinner for family immediately afterward
Music	
Clothing	
Description	Only immediate family
At Home Address	711 N. 22nd

1935: Sophia Krankurs and Simon H. Dolginoff

Bride	
Dates	Jan. 14, 1912- Sept. 8, 2002
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	June 2, 1906- May 27, 1995
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	Cigar merchant

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Romania/Russia (his place of birth on his death certificate is given as Rezina, Bessarabia, Russia), children born in Romania and Missouri
How long in US	1910
Occupation(s)	Retail grocery, Real Estate
Address	1222 5 th Ave.
Parents	Dave Krankurs (March 17, 1880- Dec. 17, 1966) Cecilia Lachtman (March 12, 1875- Dec. 28, 1947)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia, children born in MO
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Shipping clerk in a furniture co (1930),
Address	622 ½ S. 9 th St. (gone)
Parents	Louis Dolginoff (Dec. 1883- Nov. 22, 1962) buried at Shaare Shalom Ella (Sept. 10, 1888- Feb. 19, 1952)

Wedding ²⁰⁷	Jan. 6, 1935
Location	Keneath Israel Beth Sholom Synagogue, KC
Officiant	Rabbi Gershon Haddas
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Honeymoon	“A motor trip through the south”
At Home Address	Massaoit Courts, Atchison

1935: Ann Aronson and Dr. Theodore Harry Saferstein

Bride	
Dates	1908-Aug. 30, 1996
Where born	New York
Education	
Occupation	Stenographer in an accounting co.

Groom	
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	
Occupation	Physician, served in World War II

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland, children born in NY and MO
How long in US	1904
Occupation(s)	Tailor shop
Address	2203 Jules St.
Parents	Nathan Aronson Rose Aronson

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Jeweler
Address	Kansas City
Parents	Moses Aaron Saferstein (Sept. 8, 1878- June 18, 1932) he was killed in a robbery Rose Nabuzna (1882-1971)

²⁰⁷ “Krankurs-Dolginoff Marriage,” *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 7, 1935, pg. 6.

Wedding²⁰⁸	5:00 pm June 23, 1935
Location	Blue Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin
Attendants	Ruthine Aronson (sister of the bride), Milton Saferstein (KC),
Food	“After the ceremony a buffet supper will be served to relatives and intimate friends”
Music	“Preceding the ceremony, Sherman Kalis will play two violin selections, ‘At Dawning’ and ‘I Love You Truly.’ He will be accompanied at the piano by Miss Adele Pitluck, who will play the wedding march from ‘Lohengrin’ and Mendelssohn’s march. She will also play ‘To a Wild Rose’ (MacDowell) during the ceremony.”
Bride’s clothing	“She will wear a peach blossom starched lace dress made with elbow-length cape and will wear a hat of tulle in the same color. She will carry Johanna Hill Roses.”
Honeymoon	“extensive northern trip”
At Home Address	Park Lane Apartments

1936: Mollie Fishman and Milton Robert Burnett

Bride	
Dates	1914
Where born	Missouri
Education	High School
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	1908 - 1969
Where born	Nebraska
Education	High School
Occupation	Wholesale ready to wear

Bride’s Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	1906
Occupation(s)	Fruit merchant
Address	618 S. 9 th St.
Parents	Haima Fishman (April 8, 1890- July 29, 1945) Rebecca

²⁰⁸ “Marriage at Hotel,” June 23, 1935, pg. 19.

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland/Russia, children born in MO
How long in US	1904 (father) 1892 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Salesman in clothing store, Stock clerk in department store
Address	622 S. 9 th St.
Parents	Morris (Maurice) Burnett Delia

Wedding²⁰⁹	1:30 p.m. March 8, 1936
Location	Crystal Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin
Attendants	Ethel Fishman (sister of bride); Harold Burnett (groom's brother"
Food	
Music	"Before the ceremony, Miss Mildred Grinspan sang 'Because' (D'Hardelot) and 'I Love You Truly' (Bond). Miss Rose Jorban, violinist, played the wedding march from 'Lohengrin' as processional and Mendelssohn's wedding march as recessional, accompanied by Miss Adele Pitluck."
Bride's clothes	"wore a dress of mauve gray net with shoulder cape of ruffled net and gray velvet bands; tiered skirt and a short ruffled train. Her large hat was of gray tulle, and she carried an arm bouquet of Briarcliff roses, valley lilies and pink sweet peas.
Reception	"A reception for 400 guests followed the ceremony. A long table was lighted by candles in silver holders and centered with a three-tiered cake. Another decoration was a bell made of ice and lighted by colored lights."
Honeymoon	Chicago
At Home Address	Ambassador Apartments; They were in Oklahoma City by 1940

²⁰⁹ "Fishman-Burnett Marriage, *St. Joseph News Press*, March 9, 1936, pg. 6.

1936: Cecile Goldberg and Leon Aronson

Bride	
Dates	July 31, 1913- Dec. 18, 2006
Where born	Missouri
Education	Attended Central High School
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	Nov. 1, 1905 – April 5, 1973
Where born	Brenham, TX
Education	
Occupation	
	From Waco, TX

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Latvia (father), mother born in MO (parents from Poland)
How long in US	1897
Occupation(s)	Jeweler
Address	1016 Messanie
Parents	Benjamin I. Goldberg Dora Wilk

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	

Wedding²¹⁰	4:30 p.m. June 7, 1936
Location	Blue Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin
Attendants	Mrs. Harry Ungerman (sister of the bride)' Sam Aronson (Waco)
Food	"A family dinner will be held after the ceremony, in the blue room. Covers will be laid for thirty-five. The table will be centered with a three-tiered wedding cake surmounted by white rose buds. White tapers in silver candelabra will light the table."
Music	
Bride's clothes	"The bride will wear a costume suit of rough crepe, fashioned with a short fitted jacket and a white off-the-face hat. She will wear a corsage bouquet of Talisman Roses."
Honeymoon	"a wedding trip to the West Coast."
At Home Address	Waco, TX

²¹⁰ "Miss Cecile Goldberg and Leon Aronson to Wed this Afternoon," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 7, 1936, pg. 21.

1937: Bess Krankurs and Imie Garelich

Bride	
Dates	1911- May 7, 1988
Where born	At sea
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	(-Dec. 14, 1961)
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	2 years college
Occupation	Pharmacist. At time of his death owned Garelich Drugs, a pharmacy at 2102 St. Joseph Ave.

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Romania/Russia (his place of birth on his death certificate is given as Rezina, Bessarabia, Russia), children born in Romania and Missouri
How long in US	1910
Occupation(s)	Retail grocery, Real Estate
Address	1222 5 th Ave.
Parents	Dave Krankurs (March 17, 1880- Dec. 17, 1966) Cecilia Lachtman (March 12, 1875- Dec. 28, 1947)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Minsk, Russia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Shoe repair
Address	613 S. 11th
Parents	Mary Garelich Michael Garelich (1878- March 1, 1929)

Wedding ²¹¹	6:00 Oct. 17, 1937
Location	Crystal Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Myron Meyer
Attendants	Mrs. Simon Dolginoff (bride's sister), Clarice Krankurs (sister of bride); Simon Dolginoff (Atchison), Leo Agranoff
Food	
Music	"Preceding the ceremony, Miss Pearl Kinnaman will sing 'Because,' 'Ah Sweet Mystery of Life,' and 'I Love You Truly.' The processional, the bridal chorus from 'Lohengrin,' will be played by Miss Yetta Wolinsky, pianist and Keith Bucher, violinist, who will play 'Calm as the Night' (Bohm) during the ceremony and Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March' as the recessional.
Decorations	"Two hundred and fifty guests will witness the wedding service, which will be performed in front of the crystal room stage, banked with ferns and palms, decorated with two large white standards of pompons and chrysanthemums and lighted with white tapers in two large candelabra."
Bride's clothes	"The bride will wear a gown of king's blue jacquard crepe with lame button and collar trim. Her cape effect jacket has three-quarter length sleeves. A wreath of gardenias will be used to hold her veil of king's blue tulle, cut circular style. She will carry a white leather Bible ornamented on the top with a gardenia. From it will fall silver ribbons to which sprays of lilies of the valley are tied."
Reception	"A reception will follow the ceremony. The serving table will be covered with a lace cloth, lighted with white tapers and centered with a three-tier wedding cake, ornamented with a miniature bridal couple."
Honeymoon	Chicago
At Home Address	Del Rosa Apartments

²¹¹ "To Wed this Evening," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 17, 1937, pg. 18

1939: Hermine Cushman and Alvin Schwartz

Bride	
Dates	Nov. 12, 1917- Jan. 6, 2009
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	Sept. 15, 1913 – Oct. 29, 2008
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	Jewelry salesman, later insurance salesman. Served in World War II

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland (father)/ Russia (mother)
How long in US	1890 (father) 1897 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Commercial traveler for an insurance firm
Address	611 ½ S. 11 th St.
Parents	Samuel Cushman (May 10, 1886- June 12, 1969) Sophia Rositzky

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland/Russia (father) mother born in KC
How long in US	1891
Occupation(s)	Owner of a paint store
Address	Kansas City
Parents	Morris H. Schwartz (June 10, 1887- March 9, 1954) Esther Asotsky (Dec. 29, 1890- May 10, 1961)

Wedding²¹²	6:00 July 2, 1939
Location	Moila Club
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin
Attendants	Charlotte Cushman (cousin of the bride); Leslie Schwartz (brother of the groom)
Food	Dinner at the club
Music	“Miss Phyllis Pitluck will play ‘Because’ (D’Hardelot) and ‘I Love You Truly’ (Bond) preceding the service, and will play the bridal chorus from ‘Lohengrin’ as processional and Mendelssohn’s ‘Wedding March’ for recessional.”
Decoration	“in the reception room of the club, with the fireplace as a background, which will be banked with palms and ferns. White

²¹² “To Wed the Evening,” *St. Joseph News Press*, July 2, 1939, pg. 19.

	peonies, gladiolas, and white tapers will be used to decorate the room”
Bride’s clothes	“a white French tulle and lace dress made princess style with a tight bodice and very full skirt. Her finger-tip veil will be gathered into a halo of orange blossoms, and she will carry a bridal bouquet of white roses, lilies of the valley and gardenia.”
Reception	“A dinner will follow the ceremony at the club for relatives and the bridal party and later in the evening a small reception will be held for friends of the bride and groom.” The table will be centered with a four-tiered wedding cake surrounded with lilies and ferns.”
Honeymoon	“an eastern wedding trip”
At Home Address	Kansas City

1940: Frieda Blanar and Abraham Bursten

Bride	
Dates	1920-
Where born	
Education	“Miss Blanar graduated from St. Joseph Junior College in 1937, winning the scholarship offered by the local branch of the American Association of University Women to the girl graduate there ranking the highest. She is also a graduate of the University of Missouri.” Eventually earned a doctorate
Occupation	teacher

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	

Bride’s Family	
Place of Origin	Romania, children born in Virginia and Missouri.
How long in US	1907 (father) 1908 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Produce Dealer
Address	2311 Sylvanie
Parents	Morris Blanar (1883- Jan. 11, 1943). Buried at B/Nai Yaakov. Lucy Blanar – she committed suicide on June 2, 1940 by hanging at her home.

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia, children born in MO
How long in US	1904
Occupation(s)	Bakery
Address	918 Sylvania
Parents	Louis Bursten (dod Jan. 3, 1951) Esther Lechtman (Nov. 15, 1885- Aug. 16, 1961)

Wedding ²¹³	May 28, 1940
Location	San Benito , TX – groom was in the military
Officiant	
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Bride's clothes	
Reception	
Honeymoon	
At Home Address	They never returned to St. Joseph, eventually ended up in Israel.

1940: Claire Krankurs and Walter Deitchman

Bride	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	(Nov. 28, 1913 - Aug. 18, 1997)
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	
Occupation	Pharmacist – Deitchman Drug Co., Brown Drug Co.
	They moved to Lenexa; he died in Overland Park

²¹³ “Wedding Announced in Unusual Fashion,” *St. Joseph News Press*, May 27, 1940, pg. 6.

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	712 S. 28 th St.
Parents	Dave Krankurs

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Besarabia/Russia (father) Poland (mother)
How long in US	1891 (father) 1892 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Shipping clerk for Western Hat. Co.
Address	626 S. 14th
Parents	Benjamin Deitchman (Dec. 25, 1885- March 20, 1951) Rose (May 28, 1889- Nov. 22, 1983)

Wedding²¹⁴	6:00 p.m. Sept. 22, 1940
Location	Crystal Room Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin of Shaare Sholem Synagogue assisted by Rabbi S. Schor of St. Louis
Attendants	Mrs. I.L. Garelich (sister of bride), Ruby Bursten (KC), Frances Naidorf, Helen Garelich, Mrs. Si Dolginoff (sister of bride) and Mrs. Sam Schwartz (KC); Robert Dietchman (brother of groom), Si Dolginoff, Sam Schwartz, Harold Burnett, Milton Forman.
Food	
Music	"Preceding the service, Miss Grace Stringfellow, organist, will play 'Caro Mio Ben' (giordani), 'Berceuse' (godard) and 'Romance' (MacDowell). during the ceremony she will play 'To a Wild Rose' (MacDowell). She will play the bridal chorus from 'Lohengrin' as processional and Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March' for recessional. J. Donovan Roberts will sing 'Because' and 'I Love You Truly.'
Decoration	"An improvised altar of palms, ferns, and tall standards holding white tapers. The bridal couple will stand beneath a white canopy covered with ferns and white pompons."
Bride's clothes	"will wear a gown of white satin made princess style with high puffed sleeves and floor length train having insertions of Chantilly lace. Her fingertip length veil of illusion will be held in place with a coronet of orange blossoms, and she will carry a modern Colonial bouquet of white roses and orchids."
Reception	"A reception will follow the ceremony and a dinner for the immediate relatives will be given in the blue room."
Honeymoon	New York City
At Home Address	712 S. 28 th St.

²¹⁴ "Miss Krankurs to Be Honored at Tea," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 11, 1940, pg. 20; "Miss Clarie Krankurs to Become Bride Tonight," *St. Joseph News Press*, Sept. 22, 1940, pg. 21.

1940: Dorothy Mazvinsky and Fred Kotok

Bride	
Dates	July 25, 1918- Dec. 19, 2012
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	When Fred went to serve in World War II she managed the grocery store

Groom	
Dates	1918- June 11, 1993
Where born	Poland
Education	
Occupation	Manager of the B. Kotok grocery at 9 th & Olive
	In 1945 he is a private in the army and stationed in Luxembourg. He was awarded the Bronze star. He operated Fort Dodge Fruit & Grocery in Iowa.
	Died in Omaha

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia, children born in MO
How long in US	1910
Occupation(s)	In the 1930 census he is a vegetable huckster. Building contractor
Address	1816 S. 9 th St.
Parents	Sam Mazvinsky (April 15, 1884- June 24, 1960) Sophia

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Poland
How long in US	1921
Occupation(s)	Family owned a grocery store
Address	917 ½ Patee St.
Parents	Bella Kotok – mother, no mention of father anywhere. Maybe he died in Poland before the family immigrated

Wedding ²¹⁵	3:00 Sept. 1940
Location	Crystal Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levine
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Bride's clothes	
Reception	Held at 4:00 in the Crystal Room
Honeymoon	Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, Albany, NYC, Washington DC and St. Louis
At Home Address	917 ½ Patee

1941: Florence Hockman and Herman Wasserman

Bride	
Dates	June 19, 1919 – Nov. 13, 2003
Where born	Missouri
Education	Graduate of central High
Occupation	Retail clerk in a Ladies Ready to Wear store

Groom	
Dates	March 28, 1912- Jan. 30, 2010
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	Central High, University of Missouri at Columbia with a degree in journalism.
Occupation	Initially worked in advertising, then joined his father in insurance

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Romania
How long in US	1909 (father) 1905 (mother)
Occupation(s)	Retail grocery (he was a clothing merchant in 1930), the insurance
Address	527 S. 9 th St.
Parents	Jacob Hockman (d. Nov. 14, 1971) Pearl (May 18, 1900- Aug. 21, 1964)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia (father) Romania (mother)
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	

²¹⁵ "Mazvinsky-Kotok Wedding Sunday," *St. Joseph Journal*, Sept. 13, 1940, pg. 1

Address	2939 Seneca
Parents	Harry Wasserman (Sept 25, 1887- May 3, 1978) Mollie Galler (March 25, 1891- Oct. 20, 1971)

Wedding ²¹⁶	Jan. 12, 1941
Location	B’Nai Yaakov Synagogue
Officiant	Rabbi Iser Levin
Attendants	Norma Hockman (sister of bride), Charlene Hockman (sister)
Food	
Music	“Miss Eudora Freedman will sing ‘I Love You Truly’ and ‘Because.’ She will be accompanied by Miss Sylvia Nelson, who also will play the traditional wedding marches.”
Bride’s clothes	“will wear a gown of periwinkle blue chiffon with flowing sleeves and bouffant skirt. The bodice is a jerkin of all-over braided chiffon in the same shade of blue. Her finger-tip length veil is made of periwinkle blue illusion with a high coronet trimmed in orange blossoms. She will carry a Bible arranged with a spray of orchids.”
Reception	
Honeymoon	Wedding trip
At Home Address	418 N. 16 th St.

1941: Anna Droher and Milton Litvak

Bride	
Dates	Jan 25, 1922- March 2008
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	Graduated from Central High School and attended St. Joseph Junior College
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	1919-
Where born	Minnesota
Education	College and law school
Occupation	In law school at University of Missouri, Columbia at the time of the wedding

²¹⁶ “Miss Florence Hockman to Become Bride Today,” *St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 12, 1941, pg. 16.

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Yashenevsky, Russia
How long in US	1887
Occupation(s)	dentist
Address	2918 Angelique (rents)
Parents	Isaac H. Droher (widower at the time of the wedding) Ida B. Borofsky – (March 15, 1895- Oct. 6, 1933) born in KS, parents in Russia. Died of cancer. Buried at Shaare Sholem

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Bessarabia, Romania
How long in US	1914, first to Galveston, TX (6 years) and then here. (Isadore) pre-1920, from Minneapolis to here (Rose)
Occupation(s)	Owns a sporting goods store
Address	709S. 9 th St
Parents	Isadore Litvak (Nov. 15, 1893- May 23, 1960) – killed by gunshot in holdup at the store. Rose

Wedding²¹⁷	3:00 p.m. April 6, 1941
Location	Temple Adath Joseph
Officiant	Rabbi Myron Meyer
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Bride's clothes	"an ice-blue redingote dress with navy accessories and her corsage bouquet was of camellias"
Reception	At home of Bride's father
Guests	Only immediate families at both wedding and reception
Honeymoon	
At Home Address	Columbia MO
Divorce	They divorced after 31 years

²¹⁷ "Marriage Announced," *St. Joseph News Press*, April 7, 1941.

1944: Helen Brahinsky and Irving Smith

Bride	
Dates	1923-
Where born	
Education	Central High School, graduated 1939
Occupation	Employed at the Dept. of Agriculture in Washington D.C. (quit at her marriage)

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	Yeoman 2 nd Class, U.S. Navy

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia
How long in US	1913 (Morris) 1914 (Lena)
Occupation(s)	Grocer (in 1920 he was a butcher at the packing house)
Address	610 S. 10 th St.
Parents	Max (Morris) Brahanisky (July 4, 1894- Nov. 16, 1953) Buried at B'Nai Yaakov Lena

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	
Parents	

Wedding ²¹⁸	Feb. 7, 1944
Location	New Yorker Hotel, New York City
Officiant	
Attendants	
Food	
Music	
Bride's clothes	
Reception	
Honeymoon	
At Home Address	New York, where he is stationed.

²¹⁸ "Helen Brahinsky Weds in New York," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 20, 1944, pg. 19.

1946: Beverly Burnstein and Sidney Cohen

Bride	
Dates	1923-
Where born	Missouri
Education	
Occupation	

Groom	Sidney Cohen
Dates	Aug. 2, 1923 – Dec. 310, 2014
Where born	Brooklyn
Education	
Occupation	Owned and operated Sid's Markets and Brock's Market, owned coin operated laundry mats. Served in Army Air Corps in WWII.

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia (Philip), Poland (Yetta), children born in MO
How long in US	1904
Occupation(s)	Proprietor of a bakery
Address	608 S. 13 th St.
Parents	H. Philip Burnstein Yetta

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	Brooklyn, New York
Parents	Mac Cohen

Wedding ²¹⁹	7:00 Feb. 17, 1946
Location	Shaare Sholem Synagogue
Officiant	
Attendants	
Food	
Music	"Preceding the ceremony Miss Norma Lee Klamser will play 'I Love You Truly' (bond), and will accompany Miss Isabel Nelson singing 'Because' (d'Hardelot).
Bride's clothes	Bride will wear her traveling suit
Honeymoon	"leave for the East on a wedding trip"
At Home Address	

²¹⁹ "Beverly Burnstein Will Wed Tonight," *St. Joseph News Press*, February 17, 1946, pg. 18.

1947: Marcia Braun and John Abramson

Bride	
Dates	1925-
Where born	MO
Education	college
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	Jan. 23, 1924- May 3, 2007
Where born	Des Moines
Education	
Occupation	realtor

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia, children born in MO [Mother born in KC]
How long in US	1910 (Martin came to St. Joseph from St. Louis in 1916 at age 14)
Occupation(s)	Manager of A.J. August
Address	3019 Jules
Parents	Martin H. Braun Bess Donsker

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Father born in NY, his parents in Russia; mother born in Iowa, parents in Prussia
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	attorney
Address	Des Moines
Parents	Sam Abramson Adeline

Wedding²²⁰	Oct. 4, 1947
Location	Crystal Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Myron M. Meyer of Temple Adath Joseph, assisted by Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer of Des Moines
Attendants	Mrs. Calvin Adler (sister of the bride), Mrs. B. David Caplan and Mrs. Harold Lyons (groom's sisters). B. David Caplan, Calvin Adler, Harold Lyons.
Food	
Decorations	"The wedding, one of the most elaborate of the early fall season..." "A bank of palms extended the width of the room and formed a

²²⁰ "Marcia Braun was Wed Last Evening at Elaborate Rite," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 5, 1947, pg. 21

	perfect setting for the improvised altar and the myriad tapers which glowed in the tiered candelabra”
Music	“An ensemble composed of Nate Block, pianist; Mrs. Jean T. Jenkinson, harpist; Louis Riemer, violinist; and Francis Marion, cellist played ‘Serenade’ (Schubert) and ‘The Swan’ (San-Serns) preceding the service. Mrs. Jenkinson played the ‘Old Refrain’ (Kreisler) and, during the exchanging of vows, ‘Oh Perfect Love,” (Barnby). Miss Jeanette Redelfs, soloist, sang ‘I Love Thee’ (Grieg) and ‘Through the Years’ (Yeumans). Traditional marches were used.
Bride’s clothes	“the bride wore a gown of imported candlelight satin fashioned with sweetheart neckline with spray design of simulated seed pearls, long sleeves ending in points outlined in the same pearls, and full skirt with court train. Her finger-tip veil of imported bridal illusion fell from a braided coronet of satin and see pearls and she carried a white Bible overlaid with a white orchid from which cascaded streamers with button pompons. The strand of pearls she wore was a gift of the bridegroom.”
Reception	“Immediately after the service, Mr. and Mrs. Braun were host and hostess at cocktails in the blue room after which the guests returned to the crystal room for a wedding dinner. The bride’s table had for its centerpiece, a long, low arrangement of white chrysanthemums and pompons while the cake table was decorated with gardenias and white pompons.”
Honeymoon	
At Home Address	Flint Michigan

1948: Mildred Blonar and Farnol Adler

Bride	
Dates	May 21, 1921- Jan. 29, 2000
Where born	St. Joseph
Education	Central High School, St. Joseph Junior college, attended University of Oklahoma.
Occupation	

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	Central High School, St. Joseph Junior College, graduated from University of MO Columbia.
Occupation	Took over his father’s business, scrap metal

Bride's Family	
Place of Origin	Romania (father), Poland (mother), children born in MO
How long in US	1908 (father), 1907 (mother)
Occupation(s)	2734 Jules
Address	
Parents	Sigmund Blonar (Sept. 5, 1887-1981) Anna Wilk (Feb. 17, 1889- Jan. 31-1973)

Groom's Family	
Place of Origin	Russia (father) Poland (mother)
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	Owner of Missouri Iron and Metals Co.
Address	211 S. 12 th St.
Parents	Jacob Adler (Dec. 24, 1884- Jan. 18, 1956) Fannie Maggid (Jan. 20, 1890- Sept. 26, 1962)

Wedding²²¹	Oct. 2, 1948
Location	Blue Room, Hotel Robidoux
Officiant	Rabbi Myron M. Meyer of Temple Adath Joseph
Attendants	Estelle Blonar and Lucille Blonar (bride's sisters); Calvin Adler (groom's brother), Ben Trillin (KC)
Decorations	"The wedding vows were exchanged at an improvised altar wreathed in greenery and clusters of white chrysanthemums. On either side were tall candelabra with white tapers, and in front of each as a standard filled with white mums."
Food	Wedding dinner served immediately after the ceremony
Music	"Preceding the ceremony, a musical trio, Mrs. Nate Block, pianist; Louis Riemer, violinist, and Francis Marion, cellist, played Schubert's 'Serenade' and Wieniawski's 'Romance.' Louis Riemer played Saint-Saens' 'The Swan,' Marvin Gench Jr. sang Grjeg's 'I Love Thee' and Youmans' 'Through the Years.'"
Bride's clothes	"The bride wore a Victorian influence gown of angel pink satin featuring a tightly fitted, long sleeved bodice buttoned from the small collared high neckline to the waist with tiny satin-covered buttons. A deeply shirred and puffed peplum accentuated the curved waistline and the huge billowing hoop skirt which ended in a short train. Her headdress was fashioned of satin rose petals and pink illusion. She carried a sunburst bouquet of white gardenias and pink Sweetheart roses festooned with pink satin streamers to which were tied more gardenias."
Honeymoon	Short wedding trip
At Home Address	Marnell Apartments, 2120 Faraon St.

²²¹ "Blonar-Adler Wedding Said Saturday Evening at Hotel," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 10, 1948, pg. 24.

1949: Janie Goldman and Jona Cohn

Bride	
Dates	1925-2017
Where born	
Education	Accepted for Masters at University of Chicago
Occupation	
	In her obituary, “Our Savta created Jewish traditions not only for our family but for countless families who attended the BJE early childhood centers that she founded and directed.” “Teachers continue to use her child-centered approach and children find their own special love of Jewish family life.:

Groom	
Dates	
Where born	
Education	
Occupation	
	From Chicago

Bride’s Family	
Place of Origin	Poland (father), mother born in Missouri
How long in US	His obituary says that he lived in St. Joseph most of his life.
Occupation(s)	Insurance
Address	2208 Francis St.
Parents	Samuel L. Goldman (d. June 13, 1971) ²²² Rose Saferstein (Jan. 28, 1893- July 19, 1974) ²²³

Groom’s Family	
Place of Origin	
How long in US	
Occupation(s)	
Address	Chicago
Parents	

Wedding²²⁴	
Location	Home of bride’s parents, 2208 Francis St.
Officiate	Rabbis David Well and Selig S. Aurbach

²²² Samuel Goldman was described as a “Bible scholar and spiritual leader of B’Nai Sholem Temple.” He was a WWI veteran.

²²³ Rose was described in her obituary, “A member of Temple B’nai Sholem, she organized the Hadassah in 1916 and was its first president and served twice in the same office in later years. In 1926 she was elected as the first president of the southwest region of Hadassah.”

²²⁴ “Marriage of Miss Goldman,” *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 13, 1949, pg. 22.

Attendants	Zelda Goldman (bride's sister), Louise Saferstein (bride's cousin), Esther Cohn (sister of the groom, from Chicago);
Food	"After the ceremony, a buffet dinner was served from a lace covered table, centered by a three tiered cake."
Decorations	"The bride and groom stood under an arch covered with greenery, white garas and sweetpeas, flanked with tall white candles and surmounted with a silver star of David."
Music	"Miss Alma Dittmore, at the piano, played 'To a Wild Rose,' (MacDowell) and accompanied Herbert Brahinsky who sang 'At Dawning' (Cadman) and 'Y'ulai' a Hebrew song. Traditional marches were used."
Bride's clothes	"The bride wore a period gown of imported candlelight satin, the fitted torso bodice having a deep yoke of nylon illusion edged with shirred ruffles of Chantilly lace, and long sleeves ending in points over the hands. The full skirt, with court train, was edged with the lace, and her fingertip veil of illusion fell from a tiara of orange blossoms and seed pearls. She carried a white leather Bible which was given to her mother at confirmation. The book was topped with a white orchid with streamers of white satin."
Reception	
Honeymoon	
At Home Address	Chicago

Sample Non-Jewish Weddings

The weddings listed below were used as a basis of comparison for the Jewish weddings discussed above. They were chosen randomly with an attempt made to have similar dates to the Jewish ceremonies.

Anna Finley and Joseph M. Traylor²²⁵
Lelia E. Kennard and G.A. Hoffman²²⁶
Viola Bell and Ralph Innis²²⁷
Blanche Mutersbaugh and August Quentin²²⁸
Carolyn Walker and Valdemar W. Nelson²²⁹
Alice Wheeler and Ernest Schmidt²³⁰
Edith Ozenberger and John Schwader²³¹
Catherine Dameron and William Weakley²³²
Harriette George and Henry Arnold²³³
Beatrice Harvey and Clarence Beeler²³⁴
Violet Shields and Paul Maeder²³⁵
Lucille Hauber and Charles Koch²³⁶
Ila Bunn and Loren Warner²³⁷
Virginia Obermier and William F. Turley²³⁸
Elizabeth Campbell and John Smith²³⁹
Frances Karkoski and Stephen Kilanoski²⁴⁰
Marjory Cox and Calvin Burnes²⁴¹
Mable Parkinson and William Fairleigh²⁴²
Madge Maupin and Myron Funk²⁴³
Merle Herchenroder and Philip L. Frantz²⁴⁴

²²⁵ "A Very Pretty Wedding," *St. Joseph Gazette-Herald*, Oct. 25, 1894, pg. 5

²²⁶ "Kenard-Hoffman," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 26, 1915, pg. 6.

²²⁷ "Bell-Innis," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 14, 1915, pg. 6.

²²⁸ "Mutersbaugh-Quentin," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 28, 1917, pg. 6.

²²⁹ "Walker-Nelson," *St. Joseph Gazette*, May 1, 1918, pg. 5.

²³⁰ "Wheeler-Schmidt," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 2, 1920, pg. 6.

²³¹ "Ozenberger-Schwader," *St. Joseph Gazette*, April 29, 1920, pg. 5.

²³² "Dameron-Weakley Nuptials Simple Country Wedding," *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 19, 1921, pg. 13.

²³³ "Harriette George is Wed in Rose Garden; Ceremony is Simple," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Sept. 2, 1923, pg. 27.

²³⁴ "Harvey-Beeler," *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 11, 1925, pg. 5.

²³⁵ "Sheilds-Maeder," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 17, 1928, pg. 4.

²³⁶ "Hauber-Koch Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 16, 1931, pg. 6.

²³⁷ "Bunn-Warner," *St. Joseph Gazette*, Jan. 18, 1931, pg. 16.

²³⁸ "Obermier-Turley Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, Nov. 29, 1933 pg. 6

²³⁹ "Campbell- Smith Nuptials," *St. Joseph News Press*, April 4, 1935, pg. 6.

²⁴⁰ "Karkoski-Kilanoski," *St. Joseph Gazette*, June 5, 1935, pg. 4.

²⁴¹ "Cox-Burnes Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 17, 1935, pg. 6.

²⁴² "Parkinson-Fairleigh Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, March 21, 1936, pg. 6.

²⁴³ "Maupin-Funk Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 13, 1936, pg. 4.

²⁴⁴ "Herchenroder-Frantz Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, Sept. 17, 1937, pg. 6.

Maurine Loe and Rev. W. Duff Canady²⁴⁵
Angela Kent and Al Steichen²⁴⁶
Evelyn Rouner and Gordon R. Callinhan²⁴⁷
Dr. Luella Hendrickson and E. Harrison Maxwell²⁴⁸
Helen Patterson and Loren Warner²⁴⁹
Norma L. Fountain and Carl L. Goatcher²⁵⁰
Betty Jacobs and George Kolbe²⁵¹
Elizabeth Panigot and Raymond Dupree²⁵²
Loretta Pankau and Gregory Pankiewicz²⁵³
Ella Alexander and Eugene Gullick²⁵⁴
Stella Carr and Kenneth Aladeen²⁵⁵

Sources

In addition to articles from local newspapers the following were consulted:

- Levitt, Laura. "Impossible Assimilations, American Liberalism, and Jewish Difference: Revisiting Jewish Secularism." *American Quarterly* 59:3 (Sept. 2007): 807-832.
- Mazur, Allan. "How Distinct are American Jews?" *Contemporary Jewry* (July 2016): 225-241.
- Phillips, Bruce A. "Accounting for Jewish Secularism: Is a New Cultural Identity Emerging?" *Contemporary Jewry* 30:1 (June 2010): 63-85.

²⁴⁵ "Miss Maurine Loe and Rev. W.D. Canaday Wed," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 18, 1937, pg. 17.

²⁴⁶ "Angela Kent to Become Bride of Al Steichen," *St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 4, 1940, pg. 15.

²⁴⁷ "Miss Evelyn Rouner Will Become Bride Tonight," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 4, 1940, pg. 19.

²⁴⁸ "Dr. Luella Hendrickson Will Be Married Today," *St. Joseph News Press*, Sept. 1, 1940, pg. 17.

²⁴⁹ "Patterson-Warner Wedding," *St. Joseph News Press*, April 16, 1941, pg. 6.

²⁵⁰ "Wedding on Last Sunday Announced," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 31, 1941, pg. 20.

²⁵¹ "Miss Jacobs is a Bride," *St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 15, 1944, pg. 24.

²⁵² "Nuptials of Miss Panigot," *St. Joseph News Press*, June 30, 1946, pg. 21.

²⁵³ "Wedding of Miss Pankau," *St. Joseph News Press*, Nov. 2, 1947, pg. 24.

²⁵⁴ "To Marry Friday," *St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 29, 1948, pg. 25.

²⁵⁵ "Carr-Aladeen Vows Said," *St. Joseph News Press*, May 8, 1949, pg. 24.

St. Joseph's Eastern European Immigrant Community and Two World Wars

Wars always pose a challenge for the people of a nation, and there is a particular challenge for immigrant communities when both their country of origin and their country of residence are involved in the conflict. This was true for the Eastern European immigrant community in St. Joseph. Examination of local press reports and investigation into the lived experiences of individuals indicates that this community saw it as their patriotic duty to support the United States' war effort in both World War I and World War II.²⁵⁶

First World War

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian-Hungarian throne on June 28, 1914 in Sarajevo set in motion events and reactions that resulted in the descent of much of Europe into what was soon referred to as the Great War. Initially, the United States pursued a policy of non-intervention while giving some support and aid to the Allies. As a result of Germany's aggressive acts the U.S. declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917.

Though the nation did not officially declare war until the Spring of 1917, it was clear to many that the United States would be drawn into the conflict. Across the nation preparedness efforts were undertaken which generally focused on creating support for the U.S. entry into the conflict. The movement in St. Joseph was quite robust and members of the Eastern European immigrant communities took a role.

Just weeks before the declaration of war against Germany, Rabbi Louis Bernstein²⁵⁷ of Temple Adath Joseph spoke on "the ideals of the American people and the meaning of the American flag" at a patriotic luncheon held at the Baltimore Hotel in Kansas City. According to the *St. Joseph Gazette* his words "caused a patriotic stampede. . . His fervor so aroused his auditors that the men sprang to their feet, cheered, waved their napkins, and shouted themselves hoarse."²⁵⁸

Groups associated with the immigrant community took an active role in preparing their members for the challenges that would be faced on the home front. In May 1917, the St. Joseph branch of the National League for Women's Service planned to hold a class of home canning at the Jewish Settlement House on South 10th Street, but there was so much interest that the class was moved to Temple Adath Joseph on the corner of 17th and Felix Streets.²⁵⁹

As the war progressed, and its horrors in Europe became known here, local groups worked to provide aid to those suffering abroad. In December 1917, the *St. Joseph Gazette* reported that the members of Shaare Sholem synagogue raised \$300 in November to help Jewish

²⁵⁶ The experience of the large German community is very different and is a fascinating story in its own right.

²⁵⁷ Louis Bernstein (Nov. 30, 1882- Oct. 30, 1921). He was born in New Albany, Indiana to a Russian father and a German mother. He became the rabbi at Temple Adath Joseph in 1906 and served that congregation until 1920. He died in St. Joseph but is buried in Los Angeles, CA.

²⁵⁸ "Bernstein Fires Audience at K.C.," *The St. Joseph Gazette*, March 14, 1917, pg. 5.

²⁵⁹ "Many Would Take Canning Lessons," *The St. Joseph Gazette*, May 23, 1917, pg. 10.

war sufferers. This amount meant that they had raised a total of \$6,600 since January. In 1917 the Jewish community overall had raised about \$17,000²⁶⁰ for the cause.²⁶¹

Rabbi Bernstein continued to work to encourage support for the war. In June 1918 he held a special service at Temple Adath Joseph to address young men from the Jewish community who had been drafted and were to leave shortly. Rabbi Bernstein stated that “the young men of Jewish faith are held together in that faith only as a religion. Otherwise, they are Americans.”²⁶²

Members of the immigrant community answered the call to serve. One of the early enlistees was David Berenberg,²⁶³ a member of the St. Joseph police department who had immigrated from Russia. Berenberg had served in the Russian army as a teenager and then in the U.S. army when he first came to this country. That experience resulted in his commission as a major. His son Max also stepped up and in November 1917 he was a private at Camp Funston, Kansas.²⁶⁴ Albert Borofsky²⁶⁵ enlisted in May 1917, did three months of training at Camp Funston and then was deployed as a clerk in medical supply depot No. 2 with the American Expeditionary Forces in France.²⁶⁶

The image shows two documents related to the draft registration of Albert Borofsky in 1917.

Left Document: Form 1 REGISTRATION CARD
 Form 1 REGISTRATION CARD No. 30
 1 Name in full: Albert Borofsky Age in yrs: 21
 2 Home address: 626 S. 10th St. St. Joseph, Mo.
 3 Date of birth: March 22, 1896
 4 Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? Natural Born
 5 Where were you born? Germany (Town) (State) (Country)
 6 If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject?
 7 What is your present trade, occupation, or office? Bookkeeper
 8 By whom employed? Gratz & Co. Inc. St. Joseph, Mo.
 9 Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)?
 10 Married or single (which)? Single Race (specify which)? Caucasian
 11 What military service have you had? Race: no; branch: no
 12 Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)?
 I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.
 Signature: Albert Borofsky

Right Document: REGISTRAR'S REPORT
 24-4-44 A
 REGISTRAR'S REPORT
 1 Tall, medium, or short (specify which)? Medium
 2 Color of eyes? Blue Color of hair? Brown Build: no
 3 Has person lost arm, leg, hand, foot, or both (specify)? no
 I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:
 Signature: John Kellerman
 Precinct: 9-5
 City or County: St. Joseph
 State: Mo.
 Date of registration: June 5-1917
 24-4-44 A 269

²⁶⁰ The amount raised by Shaare Sholem is the equivalent of \$127,578 in 2021 dollars; the total amount is the equivalent of \$328,610.

²⁶¹ “Untitled,” *The St. Joseph Gazette*, Dec. 24, 1917, pg. 5.

²⁶² “Rabbi to Young Jews,” *The St. Joseph News Press*, June 22, 1918, pg. 13.

²⁶³ David Berenberg (Feb. 22, 1863- Jan. 25, 1948). Born in Mitau, Latvia. He was conscripted into the Russian army at age 15. He left Russia for Europe in 1879 and then in the same year emigrated to New York. In 1881, he joined the U.S. army and served in the Indian Wars until 1891. He then came to St. Joseph and joined the police force.

²⁶⁴ “Berenberg to the Army,” *The St. Joseph News Press*, Nov. 1, 1917, pg. 14.

²⁶⁵ Albert Borofsky (March 22, 1896- March 31, 1967) was born in Kansas to Hyman D. and Hannah Borofsky, Russian immigrants. When he was in the war, the family home was at 626 S. 10th Street. Before the war broke out he had graduated from Central High School in 1914 and was working as a stenographer in the office of the Morris Packing House. He died in Dallas, TX.

²⁶⁶ “From a Soldier in France,” *The St. Joseph News Press*, Dec. 28, 1917, pg. 8.

The draftees who attended Rabbi Berenstein's service at Temple Adath Joseph in June 1918 were Philip Seligman,²⁶⁷ Walter Albert Lowenberg,²⁶⁸ Samuel H. Liberman,²⁶⁹ Samuel Rosenberg,²⁷⁰ Theodore Sussman,²⁷¹ Jake Bordman,²⁷² David Tootle,²⁷³ Arthur Salmons,²⁷⁴ Max Kaufman,²⁷⁵ Stanley A. August,²⁷⁶ Herman Bordman,²⁷⁷ Meyer Gordon,²⁷⁸ and Ben Bordman.²⁷⁹ Most of these young men were either immigrants themselves or the sons of Eastern European immigrants.²⁸⁰

In August 1918, the *St. Joseph News Press* reported on the outstanding service record of Morris Caplan,²⁸¹ who was spending his ten-day furlough home with his parents. The day after war was declared on Germany, Morris joined the navy and spend two months training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station. He was then assigned to duty on the U.S.S. Pennsylvania before being transferred to a transport where he was promoted to first-class gun pointer. While serving on the transport he sank two German U boats.²⁸²

The local Eastern European community often took pride in the actions of their home nation. For Memorial Day 1918, 500 Poles took part in a parade to celebrate the entry of the

²⁶⁷ Philip Seligman (May 12, 1893-) was born in Zenkoff, Padolsk, Russia. He arrived in New York on Feb. 16, 1914. At the time that he registered for the draft he was living at 518 N. 6th St and was working as a clerk in Blocks Liquor House. He was naturalized in 1940 in Chicago.

²⁶⁸ Walter Lowenberg: (April 1, 1894). Born in Missouri to German immigrants. At the time that he registered for the draft he was living at 505 S. 9th St. and was a temporarily unemployed journalist.

²⁶⁹ Samuel H. Liberman (Feb. 4, 1895-Dec. 20, 1966). Born in St. Joseph to Russian immigrants. His father Samuel came to the U.S. in 1891 and was a grocer; his mother Edith immigrated in 1894. The 1910 census states that Edith had given birth to 10 children, but only 3 were still alive. He died in St. Louis.

²⁷⁰ Samuel Rosenberg (May 4, 1894 -). Born in Russia. At the time of his draft registration he was living at 805 S. 11th St. and was working as a cap maker for Eastern Hat and Specialty Co.

²⁷¹ Theodore Sussman (March 20, 1895-). Born in Germany.

²⁷² Jake Bordman (July 1895-). Born in Russia/Romania. At the time of his draft registration he was living at 808 S. 10th and was working for an auto livery. In the 1920 census he has returned to St. Joseph and was working as a taxi driver and living at 1206 Main St. In the 1930s he was arrested for illegal possession of liquor.

²⁷³ David Tootle (Aug. 24, 1892-Jan. 26, 1935). Born in Russia. At the time of his death of a heart attack he was a shoe merchant living at 405 Felix St. He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

²⁷⁴ Arthur Salmons (Jan. 19, 1896-). Born in Missouri. At the time of his draft registration he was a paper hanger working in the family business at 1815 Messanie St..

²⁷⁵ Max Kaufman (Sept. 4, 1893- Aug. 6, 1983). Born in Russia, and lived in St. Joseph from the age of 13. When he registered for the draft he was a self-employed salesman living at 624 S. 10th St. Following the war he returned to St. Joseph where he operated a cigar store. Toward the end of his career he was credit manager and treasurer of Joe Optican Jewelry. He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

²⁷⁶ Stanley A. August (July 9, 1886-Dec. 21, 1922). Born in St. Joseph; he was the son of the prominent clothing merchant A.J. August. He is buried at Adath Joseph Cemetery.

²⁷⁷ Herman Bordman (June 24, 1895-). Born in Russia; he arrived in New York on June 9, 1913 and was naturalized in St. Joseph on Sept. 22, 1919. He was a clothing salesman.

²⁷⁸ Meyer Gordon (July 15, 1889- Oct. 21, 1950). Born in St. Joseph, MO to Russian immigrants. At the time he registered for the draft he was a self-employed salesman. After the war he returned to St. Joseph where he owned and operated the Jerome Cafe. He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

²⁷⁹ Ben Bordman (May 24, 1895-). Born in Russia. On his draft registration card it states, "This man came to this country when he was 18 years old." At the time he registered for the draft he was a butcher for Swift & Co. and living at 1015 Sacramento.

²⁸⁰ "Rabbi to Young Jews," *The St. Joseph News Press*, June 22, 1918, pg. 13.

²⁸¹ Morris Caplan (Feb. 6, 1898 {on the draft registration card the year is 1898, but it appears to have been erased and rewritten in; on his death certificate the year is 1900} - June 26, 1967). Born in Kiev, Russia. After the war he returned to Missouri and went into the grocery business. At the time of his death he was living in Kansas City.

²⁸² "He Got Two U Boats," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Aug. 6, 1918, pg. 8.

Polish army in France into the War. Of the 500 marching, approximately 400 were from the large Polish community in South St. Joseph. Their contingent included “a uniformed rank team of thirty members of the South Side Polish society. The uniformed men, in command of John Malita,²⁸³ were the feature of the Polish representation.” The parade began at the St. Stanislaus church in the Southside and, led by a brass band from the Polish society of Ss. Peter and Paul Church, marched through South St. Joseph. When the marchers arrived at the Junction, located at King Hill and Illinois Avenues, they boarded trollies and travelled to uptown where they joined the city’s Memorial Day Parade.

The automobile containing Rev. Paul Michalak,²⁸⁴ pastor of the St. Stanislaus church, and M. Wawrzyniak,²⁸⁵ the second recruit for the Polish army secured here, headed the delegation from South St. Joseph in the procession uptown. Behind the motor car the Polish residents marched two abreast. The military unit of the society in bright blue and red uniforms with drawn swords and walking erect was applauded heartily all along the line of the march. Two truck loads of Polish children and motor cars containing the women followed the uniformed guards. The children carried American flags and were singing patriotic American songs. A large American flag carried horizontally by a group of Polish school children received much applause from the spectators.

After the parade, the participants took part in a patriotic program where the Mayor of St. Joseph spoke about the history of Poland and about Polish national heroes. Andrew Barzan,²⁸⁶ the chair of the citizens’ committee of Polish residents in Southside, spoke of the duty of Polish-Americans to the United States.²⁸⁷

When the war came to an end, many of the men who had served returned to St. Joseph and life resumed in the familiar patterns. The Eastern European communities became more assimilated into the society of the city.

Second World War

The rise of Hitler in Germany and his devastating march across Europe had a deep impact on the citizens of St. Joseph with roots in Eastern Europe, particularly those with Jewish roots. Once again, organizations that served this community stepped forward to support the war effort

²⁸³ The identity of this John Malita is uncertain. There was an extended family of Malitas in the city, but no John who was of the right age. In the 1918 City Directory there is a Juan Mlita who is one of four men with the same surname living at 615 Alabama (in the Southside of St. Joseph) who all worked as laborers.

²⁸⁴ Paul Petr Michalak (Jan. 21, 1898-) Born in Elba, Nebraska. On his draft registration card, on the line which asks “By whom employed?” he wrote “By God.” He was the first pastor of the parish, which was organized in 1914. He remained with the parish until 1920 when he took a parish in Cleveland, Ohio.

²⁸⁵ This is most likely Martin Wawrzyniak (Oct. 22, 1874- Oct. 24, 1966) Born in Posen Poland. He was a laborer at Armour. He later worked for the Board of Public Works. In the 1918 City Directory he is living at 526 Kentucky Ave. (in the Southside of St. Joseph). At the time of his death he was living at the same house and he is buried at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

²⁸⁶ There is no record of an Andrew Barzan (or indeed anyone with this surname) living in the city at this time.

²⁸⁷ “Poles Celebrate Entry of Army into the War,” *The St. Joseph Gazette*, May 31, 1918, pg. 6.

at home and to raise funds to support those impacted by the fighting in Europe. Members of the community continued to see it as their duty to serve.

In April 1942 the Workmen's Circle, local branch No. 130 working under the leadership of the Jewish Labor Committee of New York launched a campaign to collect clothing for Polish Jewish refugees. The local drive was headed by Louis Kligman.²⁸⁸

Members of the Eastern European immigrant community in St. Joseph served their nation during the war. The local newspapers provided extensive coverage concerning those local residents who were serving. On July 23, 1944 Aviation Cadet Joseph J. Jezak²⁸⁹ was leaving for Leavenworth, KS to proceed to basic training and Private Ben Eveloff²⁹⁰ was returning from 20 months serving in the Persian Gulf.²⁹¹ In October of that year, Samuel Meites²⁹² was given a direct commission as second lieutenant in the sanitary corps. His brother Joseph²⁹³ also served in the sanitary corps and was serving in a general hospital in England while yet another brother, Isidor,²⁹⁴ saw service in the Philippines and was declared missing in action since the fall of Bataan.²⁹⁵ Isidor enlisted in the army in 1941 and served with the 31st infantry regiment in the Philippines. Wounded in action twice, he became a Prisoner of War and was subject to the Bataan Death March, dying soon after. "Private Meites was awarded the Purple Hart with oak leaf cluster for wounds suffered in action and another Purple Hart posthumously. He also received the Distinguished Unit Emblem with two oak leaf clusters and the Combat Infantryman's Badge."²⁹⁶

It was not only Isidor Meites who was lost during the war. The children of other members of the immigrant community were killed in action. On Dec. 18, 1944 19-year-old Private First

²⁸⁸ "Drive to Assist Jewish Refugees," *The St. Joseph Journal*, April 10, 1942, pg. 1. Lois Kligman (Oct. 15, 1894-September 12, 1962) was born in Poland. He was the proprietor of the Louis Loan Shop. He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

²⁸⁹ Joseph Jezak (Feb. 12, 1926- Feb. 4, 2013) Born in St. Joseph, the son of Polish immigrants. He graduated from Central High School in 1944. Prior to enlistment he was employed by the *News Press* and Burlington Railroad. He served in the Army Air Corps during the war and then as part of the Occupation Forces in Japan. Following the war he returned to St. Joseph and served in the Air National Guard, reaching the rank of Master Sergeant. During the Korean Conflict he deployed to France.

²⁹⁰ Ben Eveloff (Oct. 25, 1910- Oct. 5, 1991). Born in Astrahan, Russia. He came to St. Joseph in 1912. Following the war he returned to St. Joseph where he lived until 1951, working as a self-employed bookkeeper. He died in Council Bluffs, Iowa. He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

²⁹¹ "Untitled," *The St. Joseph News Press*, July 23, 1944, pg. 4.

²⁹² Samuel Meites (Jan. 1, 1921 -). Born in St. Joseph to Russian immigrants. At the time of his registration for the draft he was a student at the University of Missouri.

²⁹³ Joseph Meites (Dec. 22, 1913 -) Born in Kishineff, Russia. At the time he registered for the draft he was a student at the University of Missouri.

²⁹⁴ "Funeral Tomorrow for Private Isidor Meites," *The St. Joseph Gazette*, Oct. 23, 1948, pg. 3; "Meites Rites Tomorrow," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 23, 1948, pg. 3. Isidor was born in Russia and came to St. Joseph with his parents when he was a year old. He graduated from Central High School and St. Joseph Junior College as well as the University of Missouri. He was salutatorian of the class of 1938 at the Junior College and graduated cum laude with a B.A. from MU in 1940.

²⁹⁵ "Untitled," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 15, 1944, pg. 4.

²⁹⁶ "Meites Rites Tomorrow," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Oct. 23, 1948, pg. 3.

Class Arthur Aronson was killed in Germany.²⁹⁷ Arthur's body was returned to St. Joseph on November 28, 1948.²⁹⁸

By 1945, the local newspapers were reporting the happy news of the safe return of some of the soldiers who had served. In July 1945 Sargent Arnold Burnstein,²⁹⁹ who had served with the 13th air force in the Pacific returned home after completing 32 months of service in the Pacific. He came home having earned two Presidential Unit Citations as well as the Asiatic-Pacific campaign ribbon with several battle stars.³⁰⁰

One of the great differences between those who served in the First World War and those who served in the Second, was that in the Second there were female enlistees. One family that gave more than their share was the Sigmund Blonar³⁰¹ family of 2734 Jules St. Their daughter Estelle³⁰² enlisted in the WAVES in 1943 and was stationed in New Orleans. In Feb. 1944, she was followed into that branch of the service by her sister Lucille.³⁰³ By May 1944, Estelle was a petty officer second class and Lucille³⁰⁴ had completed her basic training and was to report to yeoman school at Cedar Falls, Iowa.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁷ He was the son of Nathan and Rose Diamond Aronson (2203 Jules St.), Polish immigrants. At the time of his death he had been in the service for 18 months. Before the war he graduated from Central High School and attended Oklahoma A. and M. University for 5 months. As a young man he had been a paper carrier for the *News Press*. He was accorded full military services and buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery. "Arthur Aronson, 19, is Killed in Action," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 6, 1945, pg. 1; "Military Services for Private Aronson," *The St. Joseph News Press*, November 29, 1948, pg. 4.

²⁹⁸ "Returning Body of Arthur L. Aronson," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Nov. 28, 1948, pg. 7.

²⁹⁹ Arnold Burnstein (Aug. 9, 1919- May 21, 2001) Born in St. Joseph. He was the son of Phil and Yetta Burnstein, Russian immigrants, who lived at 1030 Angelique. Prior to entering the air force he had worked for the Herman Drug Company. He is buried at Shaare Sholem Cemetery.

³⁰⁰ "Arnold Burnstein Back to America," *The St. Joseph News Press*, July 22, 1945, pg. 5.

³⁰¹ Sigmund Blonar (Sept. 5, 1887-1981). Born in Romania.

³⁰² Estelle Blonar (-Jan. 20, 1987). Born in St. Joseph and graduated from Central High School and St Joseph Junior College. After the war she returned to St. Joseph where she worked for *The News Press* and was the host of radio talk shows in Kansas City and Tulsa, OK during the 1950s. She then moved to Dallas Texas where she was the executive secretary for Murchinson Bros. She married Felix Gordon. She and Felix were shot to death in Dallas in 1987. "Estelle Gordon," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 27, 1987, pg. 2.

³⁰³ Lucille Blonar graduated from Central High School and the St. Joseph Junior College. She attended the University of Oklahoma. At the time of her enlistment she was the secretary to Edward I Dunkin, director of the Buchanan County Social Security

³⁰⁴ Lucille Blonar (Feb. 19-1919 – Oct. 23, 2012). Lucille returned to St. Joseph after the war and never married.

³⁰⁵ "Second Sister in WAVES," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Feb. 5, 1944, pg. 3; "End Basic Training with the WAVES," *The St. Joseph News Press*, May 7, 1944, pg. 5.



NOW AN ENSIGN

Estelle Blonar, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sigmund Blonar, 2734 Jule street, was commissioned an ensign, June 27, having completed training at the naval reserve midshipmen's school, Northampton, Mass., and has been assigned to office of naval officer procurement, New Orleans, La. She attended Central High School and St. Joseph Junior College. Before going into the women's reserves she was employed in the advertising department of The News-Press and The Gazette.

Image from *The St. Joseph News Press*, July 9, 1944, pg. 4.

For some, the end of the war did not mark the end of their war-related service. In 1946, Tech Fifth Grade Norman L. Caplan³⁰⁶ attended a session of the Nuremberg War Trials. Caplan was serving with the 1st division headquarters attached to communications. He was permitted to attend the trial because he was the orientation non-commissioned officer for his company. He wrote a description of the proceedings to his parents Morris and Rose Caplan.³⁰⁷ Caplan completed his basic training at Camp Hood, TX in 1945. He then was stationed with the 1st division of the 3rd army in Nuremberg where he operated a switchboard and undertook other communication work.³⁰⁸

As the war ended in 1945, the young men and women from St. Joseph's Eastern European immigrant community who had served began to return home. The post war period was one of great change in the United States and certainly for the distinct ethnic communities in St. Joseph. This was the era of the growth of suburbia, the pursuit of the "American Dream" of a nice new house, a family with two children, a lovely little dog all behind a white picket fence with a carefully mown lawn. It was in the mid-century years that the St. Joseph Jewish community, which had been so vibrant and upwardly mobile dissipated, moving away until there is nearly no one of Jewish ethnicity left in the city. Many of the non-Jewish Eastern Europeans remained, but the distinct culture that they once possessed faded. Their churches either closed or dwindled to a ghost of their past lives. So while, the Eastern European Immigrant Community of St. Joseph supported their new nation in two world wars; it seems that those wars essentially killed the community.

³⁰⁶ Norman Caplan (Feb. 3, 1926- Dec. 24, 1999). Born in St. Joseph to Russian immigrants. He graduated from Central High School. At the time of his registration for the draft he was a student at St. Joseph Junior College and was employed by the Plymouth Clothing Company. "Untitled," *The St. Joseph News Press*, April 8, 1945, pg. 4.

³⁰⁷ "Norman Caplan Attends Nuremberg Trial Session," *The St. Joseph News Press*, Jan. 27, 1946, pg. 12.

³⁰⁸ "Untitled," *The St. Joseph News Press*, April 8, 1945, pg. 4; Aug. 13, 1945, pg. 4.

Conclusion

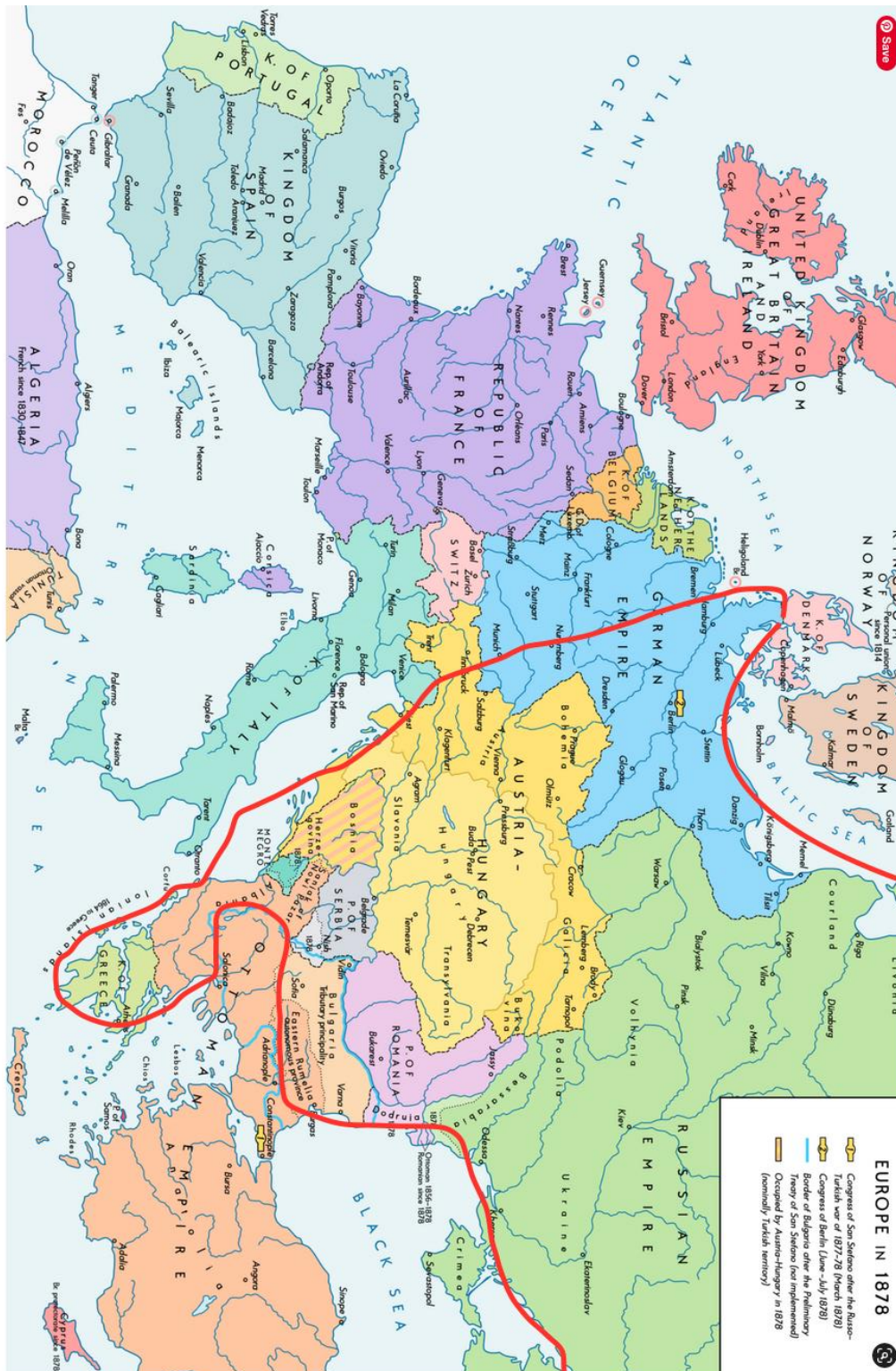
The stories of the Eastern European Immigrant community of St. Joseph are much the same as those to be found in many Midwestern industrial centers. The second half of the 19th century was a period of great economic growth, making them attractive destinations for those seeking a better life for themselves and their families. Those who chose to come to St. Joseph found both opportunity and hardship. It is difficult for us today to fathom the conditions in which many of the newcomers lived and worked. Many persevered and made for themselves the lives that they envisioned when they left their home countries.

By 1950, the distinct communities that were so much a part of life for the Eastern European Immigrant community in St. Joseph had largely disappeared. The grandchildren of the first immigrants had either fully integrated into the city or had left altogether. New waves of immigrants from Africa and Central and South America have arrived. These communities of immigrants will have their own stories to tell, many of them will be very similar to those of the groups who came before them. One can only truly understand the history of St. Joseph if the stories of all of its citizens are understood; there is much more to our history than just Joe Robidoux, Jesse James, and the Pony Express.

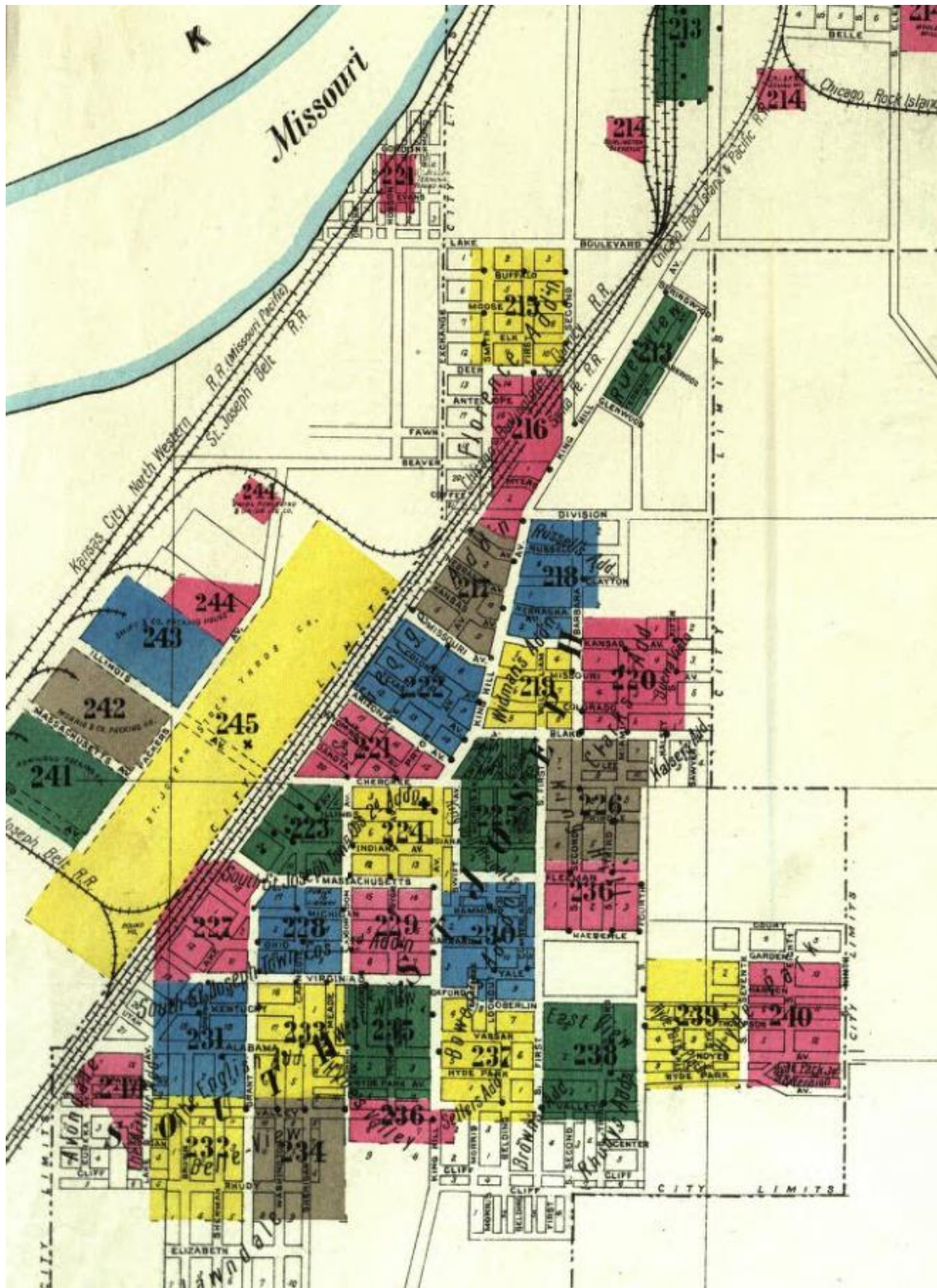
Appendix A:

Maps

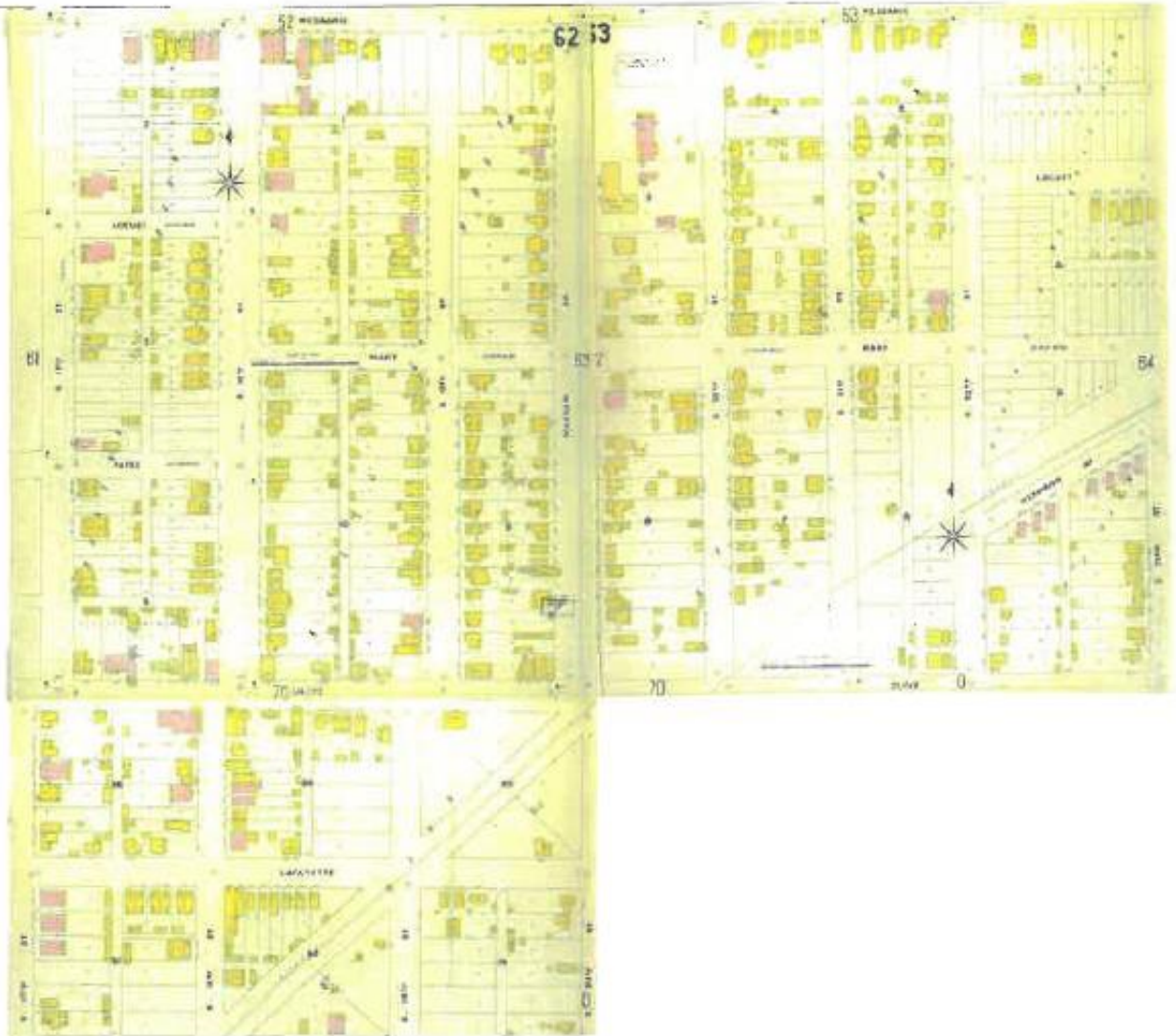
St. Joseph's Eastern European Immigrants came from the area indicated by the red line.



Southside St. Joseph



Goosetown



Appendix B

Preservation Implications

The places where the Eastern European Immigrant community lived, worked, prayed, and were buried tend to be clustered in the oldest parts of St. Joseph. These neighborhoods remain among the most diverse and interesting in the city. Unfortunately, they are also some of the most endangered. Many of the buildings where they lived their lives are gone, thus it is important that those that remain be saved.

Places of Worship: For many the heart of their community was their place of worship. Each group created homes for their faith where they felt comfortable. Many of those places of worship are gone or are threatened.

- The *Ukrainian Byzantine Catholic Church* at 526 Virginia Street is still there and is being lovingly cared for; however, its congregation is very small (and many no longer live in St. Joseph) and it seems possible that in the coming decades it might well find itself in real trouble.
- The Polish Church of *Ss. Peter and Paul* is a structure in true distress. It is no longer a Catholic Church and has served as home for various small congregations in recent decades. It suffers from deferred maintenance and general neglect.
- *Temple Shaare Sholem* at 725 S. 7th Street no longer stands; in its place is an empty lot across from a metal commercial structure.
- *Temple B'nai Yaakov* (later B'nai Sholem) at 615 S. 10th St., is no longer home to its congregation, but is a good example of successful adaptive reuse. In 2018 it was purchased by Robidoux Resident Theatre in 2018 and has been repurposed as The Ruby Theatre, where it houses their educational facilities and is home to an intimate dinner theater venue.
- *Temple Adath Joseph* still stands grandly on its corner of 17th and Felix, but its congregation is largely gone. It suffers a bit from insensitive “upgrades” such as the installation of unsightly exhaust fans on the front facade. The biggest threat to it is its size and the lack of an active congregation.

These churches are symptomatic of a larger problem in St. Joseph; many of the historic neighborhood churches are threatened by neglect. A plan for the preservation or restoration/adaptive reuse of these important buildings is needed.

Neighborhoods: The neighborhoods that lie at the heart of this study are, sadly, among the most neglected and threatened in the city.

- *Goosetown:* Olive Street is a ghost of its former self. Some of the historic structures remain, but it is a distressed district. It sits between the Museum Hill Historic District³⁰⁹ and the Patee Town Historic District. It would be a useful exercise to survey the neighborhood in order to determine if it might be a district unto itself or perhaps incorporated into one of the nearby districts. If that is not feasible, the designation of individual structures should be pursued.
- *Southside:* The Southside of St. Joseph is a place of contradictions. It has a tightly knit community and a real sense of its own identity. Vast sums of wealth are still generated there in the industries. However, since the closing of the packing houses in the 1970s, the area has been neglected and the proportion of low-income residents is disturbingly high. This is an area that preservation has largely forgotten; but it need not be so. There are neighborhoods that retain the modest housing built for the packing house workers and some of the boarding houses still stand. A preservation plan aimed at the Southside would be a useful tool.
- *South 10th Street Corridor:* The area between the two conservative Jewish Temples on S. 7th Street and S. 10th Street is largely in the Museum Hill Historic District. Museum Hill is a local historic district so it is protected by the Landmark Commission. Despite that, it is threatened by the disproportionately large number of rental structures and negligent landlords. The portion of this historically Jewish neighborhood that lies outside of the historic district is being swallowed by small-scale industrial activity and much of the building stock has been lost.

Cemeteries: One can often tell a great deal about the strength of a community by the state of its cemetery. Each of the groups discussed in this study have a cemetery associated with them.

- *B’Nai Yaakov:* This is the oldest of the three Jewish cemeteries and remains active. Though many in the Jewish community have left St. Joseph they do seem to come back to be buried. Because of its ongoing use, this cemetery is in quite good condition. This was originally a cemetery associated with the conservative arm of the Jewish community, but currently it appears that those of German descent are using it. This is perhaps because, sadly, Adath Joseph cemetery is in a sorry state of disrepair. It has a romantic air of neglect about it, but serious intervention is needed in order to save it.
- *Shaare Sholem:* Shaare Sholem cemetery is in utterly pristine condition. It is still in use by the descendants of the Eastern European Jewish community.
- *Mt. Olivet:* Mt. Olivet is the second of the Catholic cemeteries of St. Joseph. The first was Calvary where Joseph Robidoux and his family were buried. However, this cemetery

³⁰⁹ Both a local and a national district.

was permitted to fall into such ruin that the decision was made to close it and move the burials to a newer cemetery, Mt. Olivet. Mt. Olivet is a 49-acre site located off the Parkway and Lover's Lane. It is in current use and is well-maintained.

Appendix C

Further Topics for Research

This study is only a beginning of telling the stories of the people who fled Eastern Europe and came to St. Joseph. For every topic discussed here, there are many other stories that can be told. Among the most pressing of the topics that merit further research:

- ***Why did the Jewish community leave St. Joseph?*** In the space of half a century, the Jewish community went from being a vibrant, influential part of the city's life to near non-existence. The post-World War II newspapers do not indicate that there was a rise in anti-Semitism in the city.
- ***What were the conditions in the St. Joseph Packing Houses?*** Upton Sinclair's disturbing expose of the Chicago packing houses, *The Jungle*, indicates that conditions in the livestock industry were inhumane. There is no reason to believe that St. Joseph was markedly different than Chicago.
- ***Law enforcement and crime:*** Some of the immigrants went into law enforcement, while others became attorneys. It was not terribly unusual for members of the immigrant communities to encounter the law either as the victims or the perpetrators of crimes.
- ***Art, music, and culture:*** It is clear that members of the Eastern European immigrant community were culturally active. Music, art, and dance were important parts of their lives. Some of them, such as Sherman Pitluck, were fabulously talented.
- ***Relationship between the communities and with other nationalities:*** The extent to which these communities interacted with each other and with other immigrant groups as well as with "native born" citizens of the city is fascinating. I
- ***Individuals:*** Ultimately making this part of St. Joseph come to life means telling the stories of the people – where did they live, what did they do for a living, who did they love? By seeing the immigrants as individuals, we begin to understand the commonalities that bind us all together.